This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

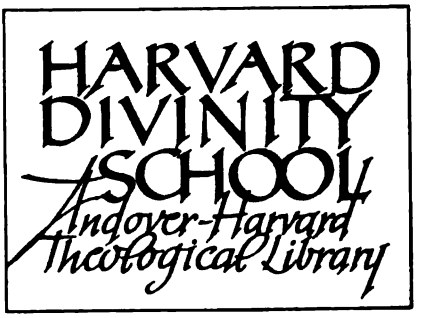
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


HARVARD
DIVINITY
SCHOOL
Andover-Harvard
Theological Library

THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF

THE RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS,

BY

REGINALD HEBER, A.M.

CANON OF ST. ASAPH, RECTOR OF HODNET, AND LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN FIFTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

OGLE, DUNCAN, AND CO. 37, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 295, HOLBORN;
AND RICHARD PRIESTLEY, 143, HIGH HOLBORN;
J. PARKER, OXFORD; AND DEIGHTON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE.

1822.

S.C.R.
BR
75
.T2
A2
1820
v. 2

THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE HOLY JESUS.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

PART I.

THE LIFE OF OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

PAGE

DEDICATION ix
The Preface xvii
An Exhortation to the Imitation of the Life of Christ lix
The Prayer lxxii

SECTION I.

The History of the Conception of Jesus 1
AD SECTION I.] Considerations upon the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, and the Conception of the Holy Jesus 4
The Prayer 9

SECTION II.

The Bearing of Jesus in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin 9
AD SECTION II.] Considerations concerning the Circumstances of the Interval between the Conception and Nativity 12
The Prayer 18

SECTION III.

The Nativity of our Blessed Saviour Jesus 19
AD SECTION III.] Considerations upon the Birth of our Blessed Saviour Jesus 22
The Prayer 29
DISCOURSE I. Of nursing Children, in Imitation of the Blessed Virgin-Mother 30
The Prayer 42

SECTION IV.

PAGE
Of the great and glorious Accidents, happening about the Birth of Jesus 43
Ad Section IV.] Considerations upon the Apparition of the Angels to the Shepherds 50
The Prayer 55
Considerations of the Epiphany of the Blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi 55
The Prayer 63

SECTION V.

Of the Circumcision of Jesus, and his Presentation in the Temple 63
Ad Section V.] Considerations upon the Circumcision of the holy Child Jesus 66
The Prayer 73
Discourse II. Of the Virtue of Obedience 74
A Prayer for the Grace of Holy Obedience 98
Considerations upon the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple 99
The Prayer 104
Discourse III. Of Meditation 105
The Prayer 123

SECTION VI.

Of the Death of the Holy Innocents, or the Babes of Bethlehem, and the Flight of Jesus into Egypt 124
Ad Section VI.] Considerations upon the Death of the Innocents, and the Flight of the Holy Jesus into Egypt 130
The Prayer 140

SECTION VII.

Of the younger Years of Jesus, and his Disputation with the Doctors in the Temple 141
Ad Section VII.] Considerations upon the Disputation of Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple 144
The Prayer 148

SECTION VIII.

Of the Preaching of John the Baptist, preparative to the Manifestation of Jesus 148
Ad Section VIII.] Considerations upon the Preaching of John the Baptist 151
The Prayer 158
Discourse IV. Of Mortification and Corporal Austerities 159
The Prayer 182

SECTION IX.

PAGE
Of Jesus being baptized, and going into the Wilderness to be tempted .. 183
Ad Section IX.] Considerations upon the Baptizing, Fasting, and Temptation of the Holy Jesus by the Devil 188
The Prayer 200
Discourse V. Of Temptation 201
The Prayer 233
Discourse VI. Of Baptism. Part I. 234
Of baptizing Infants. Part II. 258
The Prayer 296
Appendix ad Section IX.] Christ's Prayer at his Baptism 297

PART II.

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE HOLY JESUS.

Dedication 303

SECTION X.

Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony of John, and a Miracle 305
Ad Section X.] Considerations touching the Vocation of five Disciples, and of the first Miracle of Jesus, done at Cana, in Galilee .. 309
The Prayer 317
Discourse VII. Of Faith 318
The Prayer 332

SECTION XI.

Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover, the first time after his Manifestation, and what followed, till the Expiration of the Office of John the Baptist 334
Ad Section XI.] Considerations upon the first Journey of the Holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the Merchants out of the Temple 338
The Prayer 342
Discourse VIII. Of the Religion of Holy Places 343
The Prayer 360

SECTION XII.

Of Jesus' Departure into Galilee; his Manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching; his calling of Disciples; and what happened until the Second Passover 361

PAGE

Ad Section XII.] Considerations upon the Intercourse happening between the Holy Jesus and the Woman of Samaria 372
The Prayer 381

Ad Section XII.] Considerations upon Christ's First Preaching, and the Accidents happening about that Time 382
The Prayer 390

Discourse IX. Of Repentance 391
The Prayer 441
Upon Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and of the Eight Beatitudes 442
The Prayer 464

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

AND MOST TRULY NOBLE LORD,

CHRISTOPHER LORD HATTON,

BARON HATTON, OF KIRBY, &c.

MY LORD,

WHEN interest divides the church, and the calentures of men breathe out in problems and unactive discourses, each part, in pursuance of its own portion, follows that proposition, which complies with and bends in all the flexures of its temporal ends; and while all strive for truth, they hug their own opinions dressed up in her imagery, and they dispute for ever; and either the question is indeterminable, or, which is worse, men will never be convinced. For such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeal and fancy, and end not at all but in schisms and uncharitable names, and too often dip their feet in blood. In the mean time, he that gets the better of his adversary, oftentimes gets no good to himself; because, although he hath fast

hold upon the right side of the problem, he may be an ill man in the midst of his triumphant disputations. And therefore it was not here, that God would have man's felicity to grow: for our condition had been extremely miserable, if our final state had been placed upon an uncertain hill, and the way to it had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move: for the man should have tended to an end of an uncertain dwelling, and walked to it by ways not discernible, and arrived thither by chance; which, because it is irregular, would have discomposed the pleasures of a Christian hope, as the very disputing hath already destroyed charity, and disunited the continuity of faith; and in the consequent there would be no virtue, and no felicity. But God, who never loved that man should be too ambitiously busy in imitating his wisdom, (and man lost paradise for it,) is most desirous we should imitate his goodness, and transcribe copies of those excellent emanations from his holiness, whereby as he communicates himself to us in mercies, so he propounds himself imitable by us in graces. And in order to this, God hath described our way plain, certain, and determined: and although he was pleased to leave us undetermined in the questions of exterior communion, yet he put it past all question, that we are bound to be charitable. He hath placed the question of the

state of separation in the dark, in hidden and undiscerned regions; but he hath opened the windows of heaven, and given great light to us, teaching how we are to demean ourselves in the state of conjunction. Concerning the salvation of heathens he was not pleased to give us account; but he hath clearly described the duty of Christians, and tells upon what terms alone we shall be saved. And although the not inquiring into the ways of God and the strict rules of practice have been instrumental to the preserving them free from the serpentine enfoldings and labyrinths of dispute, yet God also, with a great design of mercy, hath writ his commandments in so large characters, and engraven them in such tables, that no man can want the records, nor yet skill to read the hand-writing upon this wall, if he understands what he understands, that is, what is placed in his own spirit. For God was therefore desirous that human nature should be perfected with moral, not intellectual excellencies; because these only are of use and compliance with our present state and conjunction. If God had given to eagles an appetite to swim, or to the elephant strong desires to fly, he would have ordered that an abode in the sea and the air respectively should have been proportionable to their manner of living; for so God hath done to man, fitting him with such excellencies, which are useful to him in his ways and progress to per-

fection. A man hath great use and need of justice, and all the instances of morality serve his natural and political ends; he cannot live without them, and be happy: but the filling the rooms of the understanding with airy and ineffective notions, is just such an excellency, as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best the nightingale shall excel him, and it is of no use to that end, which God designed him in the first intentions of creation.

In pursuance of this consideration, I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of theology, which is wholly practical; that which makes us wiser, therefore, because it makes us better. And truly, my Lord, it is enough to weary the spirit of a disputer, that he shall argue till he hath lost his voice, and his time, and sometimes the question too; and yet no man shall be of his mind more than was before. How few turn Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Roman Catholics, from the religion either of their country or interest! Possibly two or three weak or interested, fantastic and easy, prejudicate and effeminate understandings, pass from church to church, upon grounds as weak as those, for which formerly they did dissent; and the same arguments are good or bad, as exterior accidents or interior appetites shall determine. I deny not but, for great causes, some opinions are to be quitted: but when I consider how few do for-

sake any, and when any do, oftentimes they choose the wrong side, and they that take the righter, do it so by contingency, and the advantage also is so little, I believe that the triumphant persons have but small reason to please themselves in gaining proselytes, since their purchase is so small, and as inconsiderable to their triumph, as it is unprofitable to them, who change for the worse or for the better upon unworthy motives. In all this there is nothing certain, nothing noble. But he that follows the work of God, that is, labours to gain souls, not to a sect and a subdivision, but to the Christian religion, that is, to the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, hath a promise to be assisted and rewarded: and all those that go to heaven, are the purchase of such undertakings, the fruit of such culture and labours; for it is only a holy life that lands us there.

And now, my Lord, I have told you my reasons, I shall not be ashamed to say, that I am weary and toiled with rowing up and down in the seas of questions, which the interests of Christendom have commenced, and in many propositions, of which I am heartily persuaded I am not certain that I am not deceived; and I find that men are most confident of those articles, which they can so little prove, that they never made questions of them: but I am most certain, that by living in the religion and fear of God, in obedience to the King, in the charities and duties of communion with my spiritual

guides, in justice and love with all the world in their several proportions, I shall not fail of that end, which is perfective of human nature, and which will never be obtained by disputing.

Here, therefore, when I had fixed my thoughts, upon sad apprehensions that God was removing our candlestick, (for why should he not, when men themselves put the light out, and pull the stars from their orbs, so hastening the day of God's judgment?) I was desirous to put a portion of the holy fire into a repository, which might help to reenkindle the incense, when it shall please God religion shall return, and all his servants sing, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," with a voice of eucharist.

But now, my Lord, although the results and issues of my retirements and study do naturally run towards you, and carry no excuse for their forwardness, but the confidence that your goodness rejects no emanation of a great affection; yet in this address I am apt to promise to myself a fair interpretation, because I bring you an instrument and auxiliaries to that devotion, whereby we believe you are dear to God, and know that you are to good men. And if these little sparks of holy fire, which I have heaped together, do not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertain a thought, to actuate a passion, to employ and hallow a fancy,

and put the body of your piety into fermentation, by presenting you with the circumstances and parts of such meditations, which are symbolical to those of your daily office, and which are the *passe-temps* of your severest hours. My Lord, I am not so vain to think, that in the matter of devotion, and the rules of justice and religion, (which is the business of your life,) I can add any thing to your heap of excellent things: but I have known and felt comfort by reading, or hearing from other persons, what I knew myself; and it was unactive upon my spirit, till it was made vigorous and effective from without. And in this sense I thought I might not be useless and impertinent.

My Lord, I designed to be instrumental to the salvation of all persons, that shall read my book: but unless (because souls are equal in their substance, and equally redeemed) we are obliged to wish the salvation of all men, with the greatest, that is, with equal desires, I did intend, in the highest manner I could, to express how much I am to pay to you, by doing the offices of that duty, which, although you less need, yet I was most bound to pay, even the duties and charities of religion; having this design, that when posterity (for certainly they will learn to distinguish things and persons) shall see your honoured name employed to separate and rescue these papers from contempt, they may with the more confidence

expect in them something fit to be offered to such a personage. My Lord, I have my end, if I serve God and you, and the needs and interests of souls; but shall think my return full of reward, if you shall give me pardon, and put me into your litanies, and account me in the number of your relatives and servants; for indeed, my Lord, I am most heartily

Your Lordship's most affectionate

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

THE PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN religion hath so many exterior advantages to its reputation and advancement, from the Author and from the Ministers, from the fountain of its origination and the channels of conveyance, (God being the Author, the Word Incarnate being the great Doctor and Preacher of it, his life and death being its consignation, the Holy Spirit being the great argument and demonstration of it, and the Apostles the organs and conduits of its dissemination,) that it were glorious beyond all opposition and disparagement, though we should not consider the excellency of its matter, and the certainty of its probation, and the efficacy of its power, and the perfection and rare accomplishment of its design. But I consider that Christianity is therefore very little understood, because it is reproached upon that pretence, which its very being and design does infinitely confute. It is esteemed to be a religion contrary in its principles or in its precepts to that wisdom [a], whereby the world is governed, and commonwealths increase, and greatness is acquired, and kings go to war, and our ends of interest are served and promoted; and that it is an institution so wholly in order to another world, that it does not at all communicate with this, neither in its end nor in its discourses, neither in the policy nor in the philosophy; and therefore, as the doctrine of the cross was entertained at first in scorn by the Greeks, in offence and indignation by the Jews, so is the whole system and collective body of Christian philosophy esteemed imprudent by

[a] ——— Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices, miseros fuge. Sidera terrâ
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto.
Sceptrorum via tota perit, si pendere justa
Incipit; evertitque arces respectus honesti.
Libertas scelerum est, quæ regna invisa tuetur,
Sublatusque modus gladiis. Facere omnia sævè
Non impunè licet, nisi dum facis. Exeat aulâ
Qui volet esse pius: virtus et summa potestas
Non coëunt. Semper metuet quem sæva pudebunt.—*Lucan.* l. viii. 486,

the politics of the world, and flat and irrational by some men of excellent wit and sublime discourse; who, because the permissions and dictates of natural, true, and essential reason, are, at no hand, to be contradicted by any superinduced discipline, think that whatsoever seems contrary to their reason is also violent to our nature, and offers indeed a good to us, but by ways unnatural and unreasonable. And I think they are very great strangers to the present affairs and persuasions of the world, who know not that Christianity is very much undervalued upon this principle, men insensibly becoming unchristian, because they are persuaded, that much of the greatness of the world is contradicted by the religion. But certainly no mistake can be greater: for the holy Jesus by his doctrine did instruct the understandings of men, made their appetites more obedient, their reason better principled, and argumentative with less deception, their wills apter for noble choices, their governments more prudent, their present felicities greater, their hopes more excellent, and that duration, which was intended to them by their Creator, he made manifest to be a state of glory: and all this was to be done and obtained respectively by the ways of reason and nature, such as God gave to man then, when at first he designed him to a noble and an immortal condition; the Christian law being, for the substance of it, nothing but the restitution[b] and perfection of the law of nature. And this I shall represent in all the parts of its natural progression; and I intend it not only as a preface to the following books, but for an introduction and invitation to the whole religion.

2. For God, when he made the first emanations of his eternal being, and created man as the end of all his productions here below, designed him to an end such as himself was pleased to choose for him, and gave him abilities proportionable to attain that end. God gave man a reasonable and an intelligent nature[c]; and to this noble nature he

[b] Οὐκ Ἰουδαϊσμὸς, οὐχ ἅπερ τις ἑτέρα, (scil. ante diluvium) ἀλλ', ὡς εἰκὸς, ἡ τῶν πίστις ἐμπολιτευομένη ἐν τῇ ἄρτι ἀγίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς οὖσα, καὶ ὕστερον πάλιν ἀποκαλυφθεῖσα.—*Epiph. Panar.* l. i. tom. i. num. 5.

Nihil autem magis congruit cum hominis naturâ quàm Christi philosophia, quæ penè nihil aliud agit quàm ut naturam collapsam suæ restituat innocentiæ.—*Erasm. in* xi. *cap. Matt.*

[c] Ratio Dei Deus est humanis rebus consulens, quæ causa est hominibus

designed as noble an end: he intended man should live well and happily, in proportion to his appetites, and in the reasonable doing and enjoying those good things, which God made him naturally to desire. For, since God gave him proper and peculiar appetites with proportion to their own objects, and gave him reason and abilities not only to perceive the sapidness and relish of those objects, but also to make reflex acts upon such perceptions, and to perceive that he did perceive, which was a rare instrument of pleasure and pain respectively; it is but reasonable to think, that God, who created him in mercy, did not only proportion a being to his nature, but did also provide satisfaction for all those appetites and desires, which himself had created and put into him. For, if he had not, then the being of a man had been nothing but a state of perpetual affliction, and the creation of men had been the greatest unmercifulness in the world; disproportionate objects being mere instances of affliction, and those unsatisfied appetites nothing else but instruments of torment.

3. Therefore, that this intendment of God and nature should be effected, that is, that man should become happy, it is naturally necessary that all his regular appetites should have an object appointed them, in the fruition of which felicity must consist: because nothing is felicity but when what was reasonably or orderly desired is possessed; for the having what is not desired, or the wanting of what we desired, or the desiring what we should not, are the several constituent parts of infelicity; and it can have no other constitution.

4. Now the first appetite man had in order to his great end was, to be as perfect as he could, that is, to be as like the best thing he knew as his nature and condition would permit[d]. And although by Adam's fancy and affection to his wife, and by God's appointing fruit for him, we see the lower appetites were first provided for; yet the first appetite which man had, as he distinguishes from lower creatures, was to be like God, (for by that the devil tempted him); and

benè beatèque vivendi, si non concessum sibi munus à summo Deo negligant. —*Chalcid. ad Timæ.* 16.

[d] Ἐν τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ βέλτιον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχεται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον. ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον.—*Arist. de Cœlo.*

in order to that he had naturally sufficient instruments and abilities. For although by being abused with the devil's sophistry he chose an incompetent instrument, yet because it is naturally certain, that love is the greatest assimilation of the object and the faculty, Adam by loving God might very well approach nearer him according as he could. And it was natural to Adam to love God, who was his Father, his Creator, the fountain of all good to him, and of excellency in himself; and whatsoever is understood to be such, it is as natural for us to love, and we do it for the same reasons, for which we love any thing else; and we cannot love for any other reason, but for one or both these in their proportion apprehended.

5. But because God is not only excellent and good, but, by being supreme Lord, hath power to give us what laws he pleases, obedience to his laws therefore becomes naturally, but consequently, necessary, when God decrees them; because he does make himself an enemy to all rebels and disobedient sons, by affixing penalties to the transgressors: and therefore disobedience is naturally inconsistent, not only with love to ourselves, because it brings afflictions upon us, but with love to our supreme Lawgiver: it is contrary to the natural love we bear to God so understood, because it makes him our enemy, whom naturally and reasonably we cannot but love; and therefore also opposite to the first appetite of man, which is to be like God, in order to which we have naturally no instrument but love, and the consequents of love.

6. And this is not at all to be contradicted by a pretence that a man does not naturally know there is a God; because by the same instrument by which we know that the world began, or that there was a first man, by the same we know that there is a God, and that he also knew it too, and conversed with that God, and received laws from him. For if we discourse of man, and the law of nature, and the first appetites, and the first reasons abstractedly, and in their own complexions, and without all their relations and provisions, we discourse jejunely, and falsely, and unprofitably. For as man did not come by chance, nor by himself, but from the universal Cause, so we know that this universal Cause did do all that was necessary for him, in order to the end he appointed

him. And therefore to begin the history of a man's reason, and the philosophy of his nature, it is not necessary for us to place him there, where without the consideration of a God[e], or society, or law, or order, he is to be placed, that is, in the state of a thing rather than a person; but God by revelations and scriptures having helped us with propositions and parts of story relating man's first and real condition, from thence we can take the surest account, and make the most perfect derivation of propositions.

7. From this first appetite of man to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love, descend all the first obligations of religion; in which there are some parts more immediately and naturally expressive, others by superinduction and positive command. Natural religion I call such actions, which either are proper to the nature of the thing we worship, (such as are giving praises to him, and speaking excellent things of him, and praying to him for such things as we need, and a readiness to obey him in whatsoever he commands,) or else such as are expressions proportionate to our natures that make them; that is, giving to God the best things we have, and by which we can declare our esteem of his honour and excellency; assigning some portion of our time, of our estate, the labours of our persons, the increase of our store, first fruits, sacrifices, oblations, and tithes[f]; which therefore God rewards, because he hath allowed to our natures no other instruments of doing him honour, but by giving to him in some manner, which we believe honourable and apt, the best thing we have.

8. The next appetite a man hath is to beget one like himself, God having implanted that appetite into man for the propagation of mankind, and given it as his first blessing and permission: "It is not good for man to be alone;" and "Increase and multiply." And Artemidorus[g] had something of this doctrine, when he reckons these two laws of nature, "Deum colere, mulieribus vinci," "to worship God, and to be overcome by women," in proportion to his two first

[e] Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν εἰρεῖν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄλλην ἀρχὴν, οὐδὲ ἄλλην γένεσιν, ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως· ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ δεῖ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀρχὴν ἔχειν, εἴ μέλλομέν τι ἐρεῖν περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν.—*Chrysip. de Diis*, 3.

[f] Σπένδειν, καὶ θύειν, καὶ ἀπάρχεσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, ἐπάστοτε προσήκει καθαρῶς, καὶ μὴ ἐπισεσυρμένως, μηδὲ ἀμελῶς, μηδὲ γλισχρῶς, μηδὲ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν.—*Epict.* c. xxxviii.

[g] De Somn. Sign.

appetites of nature, "to be like God, and to have another like himself." This appetite God only made regular by his first provisions of satisfaction. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrows, for the instrument of multiplication; and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more: which we do not only know by an after revelation, the holy Jesus having declared it to have been God's purpose; but Adam himself understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride[h]. And although there were permissions afterward of polygamy, yet there might have been a greater pretence of necessity at first, because of enlarging and multiplying fountains rather than channels; and three or four at first would have enlarged mankind by greater proportion than many more afterwards; little distances near the centre make greater and larger figures, than when they part near the fringes of the circle; and therefore those after permissions were to avoid a greater evil, not a hallowing of the license, but a reproach of their infirmity. And certainly the multiplication of wives is contrariant to that design of love and endearment, which God intended at first between man and wife.

> ——— Connubia mille,
> Non illis generis nexus, non pignora curæ,
> Sed numero languet pietas[i] ———

And amongst them that have many wives[k], the relation and necessitude is trifling and loose, and they are all equally contemptible; because the mind entertains no loves or union where the object is multiplied, and the act unfixed and distracted. So that this having a great commodity in order to man's great end, that is, of living well and happily, seems to be intended by God in the nature of things and instruments natural and reasonable towards man's end; and therefore to be a law, if not natural, yet at least positive and superinduced at first, in order to man's proper end. However, by the provision which God made for satisfaction of

[h] Gen. ii. 24.
[i] Claudian. Bell. Gildon. 441.
[k] Sallust. Jugurth. c. lxxx.

> ——— οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν,
> Δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ' ἓν' ἰσίας ἔχειν·
> Ἀλλ' εἰς μίαν βλέποντες εὐναίαν κύπριν
> Στέργουσιν, ὅστις μὴ κακῶς οἰκεῖν θέλει.—*Eurip. Androm.* 179.

this appetite of nature, all those actions, which deflect and err from the order of this end, are unnatural and inordinate, and not permitted by the concession of God, nor the order of the thing; but such actions only, which naturally produce the end of this provision and satisfaction, are natural, regular, and good.

9. But by this means man grew into a society and a family, and having productions of his own kind, which he naturally desired, and therefore loved, he was consequently obliged to assist them in order to their end, that they might become like him, that is, perfect men, and brought up to the same state: and they also by being at first impotent, and for ever after beneficiaries[1] and obliged persons, are for the present subject to their parents, and for ever after bound to duty; because there is nothing which they can do, that can directly produce so great a benefit to the parents as they have to the children. From hence naturally descend all those mutual obligations between parents and children, which are instruments of protection and benefit on the one side, and duty and obedience on the other; and all these to be expressed according as either of their necessities shall require, or any stipulation or contract shall appoint, or shall be superinduced by any positive laws of God or man.

10. In natural descent of the generations of man this one first family was multiplied so much, that for conveniency they were forced to divide their dwellings; and this they did by families especially, the great father being the major-domo to all his minors. And this division of dwellings, although it kept the same form and power in the several families, which were in the original, yet it introduced some new necessities, which, although they varied in the instance, yet were to be determined by such instruments of reason, which were given to us at first upon foresight of the public necessities of the world. And when the families came to be divided, that their common parent being extinct, no master of a family had power over another master; the rights of such men and their natural power became equal, because there was nothing to distinguish them, and because they

[1] Nihil enim est liberis proprium, quod non parentum sit priùs, qui aut de suo dederant, aut acquirendi præbuerant causas.—*Philo.*

might do equal injury, and invade each other's possessions, and disturb their peace, and surprise their liberty. And so also was their power of doing benefit equal, though not the same in kind. But God, who made man a sociable creature, because he knew it was "not good for him to be alone," so dispensed the abilities and possibilities of doing good, that in something or other every man might need or be benefited by every man[m]. Therefore, that they might pursue the end of nature, and their own appetites of living well and happily, they were forced to consent to such contracts, which might secure and supply to every one those good things, without which he could not live happily. Both the appetites, the irascible and the concupiscible, fear of evil, and desire of benefit, were the sufficient endearments of contracts, of societies, and republics. And upon this stock were decreed and hallowed all those propositions, without which bodies politic and societies of men cannot be happy[n]. And in the transaction of these, many accidents daily happening, it grew still reasonable, that is, necessary to the end of living happily, that all those after obligations should be observed with the proportion of the same faith and endearment which bound the first contracts. For though the natural law be always the same, yet some parts of it are primely necessary, others by supposition and accident; and both are of the same necessity, that is, equally necessary in the several cases. Thus, to obey a king is as necessary and naturally reasonable as to obey a father, that is, supposing there be a king, as it is certain naturally a man cannot be, but a father must be supposed. If it be made necessary that I promise, it is also necessary that I perform it; for else I shall return to that inconvenience, which I sought to avoid when I made the promise; and though the instance be very far removed from the first necessities and accidents of our prime being and production, yet the reason still pursues us, and natural reason reaches up to the very last minutes, and orders the most remote particulars of our well-being.

11. Thus, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill, are very reasonable prosecutions of the great end of nature,

[m] Animus inveniet liberalitatis materiam, etiam inter angustias paupertatis.—*Senec. de Benefic.* c. i.

[n] Commoda præterea patriæ tibi prima putare.—*Lucilius.*

of living well and happily; but when a man is said to steal, when to be a murderer, when to be incestuous, the natural law doth not teach in all cases; but when the superinduced constitution hath determined the particular law, by natural reason we are obliged to observe it: because, though the civil power makes the instance, and determines the particular; yet right reason makes the sanction, and passes the obligation. The law of nature makes the major proposition; but the civil constitution, or any superinduced law, makes the assumption in a practical syllogism. To kill is not murder; but to kill such persons, whom I ought not. It was not murder, among the Jews, to kill a manslayer, before he entered a city of refuge; to kill the same man after his entry, was. Among the Romans [a], to kill an adulteress or a ravisher in the act, was lawful; with us, it is murder. Murder, and incest, and theft, always were unlawful; but the same actions were not always the same crimes. And it is just with these, as with disobedience, which was ever criminal; but the same thing was not estimated to be disobedience; nor indeed could any thing be so, till the sanction of a superior had given the instance of obedience. So for theft: to catch fish in rivers, or deer, or pigeons, when they were esteemed feræ naturæ, of a wild condition, and so primò occupantis, was lawful; just as to take or kill badgers or foxes, and beavers and lions: but when the laws had appropriated rivers, and divided shores, and imparked deer, and housed pigeons, it became theft to take them without leave. To despoil the Egyptians was not theft, when God, who is the Lord of all possessions, had bidden the Israelites; but to do so now, were the breach of the natural law, and of a divine commandment. For the natural law, I said, is eternal in the sanction, but variable in the instance and the expression. And indeed the laws of nature are very few; they were but two at first, and but two at last, when the great change was made from families to kingdoms. The first is, to do duty to God; the second is, to do to ourselves and our neighbours, that is, to our neighbours as to ourselves, all those actions, which naturally, reasonably, or by institution or emergent necessity, are in order to a happy life. Our

[a] A. Gellius, l. x. 23.

blessed Saviour reduces all the law to these two: 1. Love the Lord with all thy heart: 2. Love thy neighbour as thyself. In which I observe, in verification of my former discourse[p], that love is the first natural bond of duty to God, and so also it is to our neighbour. And therefore all intercourse with our neighbour was founded in, and derived from, the two greatest endearments of love in the world. A man came to have a neighbour, by being a husband and a father.

12. So that still there are but two great natural laws, binding us in our relations to God and man; we remaining essentially, and, by the very design of creation, obliged to God in all, and to our neighbours in the proportions of equality, as thyself; that is, that he be permitted and promoted, in the order to his living well and happily, as thou art: for love being there not an affection, but the duty that results from the first natural bands of love, which began neighbourhood, signifies justice, equality, and such reasonable proceedings, which are in order to our common end of a happy life; and is the same with that other, "Whatsoever ye would, that men should do to you, do you to them;" and that is certainly the greatest and most effective love; because it best promotes that excellent end, which God designed for our natural perfection. All other particulars are but prosecutions of these two, that is, of the order of nature: save only that there is a third law, which is a part of love too; it is self-love; and therefore is rather supposed, than at the first expressed, because a man is reasonably to be presumed to have in him a sufficient stock of self-love, to serve the ends of his nature and creation; and that is, that man demean and use his own body in that decorum, which is most orderly and proportionate to his perfective end of a happy life; which Christian religion calls sobriety; and it is a prohibition of those uncharitable, self-destroying sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and inordinate and unreasonable manners of lust, destructive of nature's intendments, or at least no ways promoting them. For it is naturally lawful to satisfy any of these desires, when the desire does not carry the satisfaction beyond the design of nature, that is, to the violation of

[p] Num. 4.

health, or that happy living, which consists in observing those contracts, which mankind thought necessary to be made, in order to the same great end; unless where God hath superinduced a restraint, making an instance of sobriety to become an act of religion, or to pass into an expression of duty to him: but then it is not a natural, but a religious sobriety, and may be instanced in fasting or abstinence from some kinds of meat, or some times or manners of conjugation. These are the three natural laws, described in the Christian doctrine; that we live, 1. godly; 2. soberly; 3. righteously. And the particulars of the first are ordinarily to be determined by God immediately, or his vicegerents, and by reason observing and complying with the accidents of the world, and dispositions of things and persons; the second, by the natural order of nature, by sense, and by experience; and the third, by human contracts and civil laws.

13. The result of the preceding discourse is this. Man, who was designed by God to a happy life, was fitted with sufficient means to attain that end, so that he might, if he would, be happy; but he was a free agent, and so might choose. And it is possible, that man may fail of his end, and be made miserable, by God, by himself, or by his neighbour; or, by the same persons, he may be made happy in the same proportions, as they relate to him. If God be angry or disobeyed, he becomes our enemy, and so we fail: if our neighbour be injured or impeded in the direct order to his happy living, he hath equal right against us, as we against him, and so we fail that way: and if I be intemperate, I grow sick and worsted in some faculty, and so I am unhappy in myself. But if I obey God, and do right to my neighbour, and confine myself within the order and design of nature; I am secured in all ends of blessing, in which I can be assisted by these three, that is, by all my relatives; there being no end of man designed by God in order to his happiness, to which these are not proper and sufficient instruments. Man can have no other relations, no other discourses, no other regular appetites, but what are served and satisfied by religion, by sobriety, and by justice. There is nothing, whereby we can relate to any person, who can hurt us, or do us benefit, but is provided for in these three. These, therefore, are all; and these are sufficient.

14. But now it is to be inquired, how these become laws obliging us to sin, if we transgress, even before any positive law of God be superinduced: for else, how can it be a natural law, that is, a law obliging all nations and all persons, even such who have had no intercourse with God by way of special revelation, and have lost all memory of tradition? For either such persons, whatsoever they do, shall obtain that end, which God designed for them in their nature, that is, a happy life according to the duration of an immortal nature; or else they shall perish for prevaricating of these laws. And yet, if they were no laws to them, and decreed and made sacred by sanction, promulgation, and appendant penalties, they could not so oblige them, as to become the rule of virtue or vice.

15. When God gave us natural reason, that is, sufficient ability to do all that should be necessary to live well and happily, he also knew, that some appetites might be irregular, just as some stomachs would be sick, and some eyes blind; and a man, being a voluntary agent, might choose an evil with as little reason, as the angels of darkness did, that is, they might do unreasonably, because they would do so; and then a man's understanding should serve him but as an instrument of mischief, and his will carry him on to it with a blind and impotent desire; and then the beauteous order of creatures would be discomposed by unreasonable, and unconsidering, or evil persons. And therefore it was most necessary, that man should have his appetites confined within the designs of nature, and the order to his end; for a will, without the restraint of a superior power or a perfect understanding, is like a knife in a child's hand, as apt for mischief as for use. Therefore it pleased God to bind man, by the signature of laws, to observe those great natural reasons, without which man could not arrive at the great end of God's designing; that is, he could not live well and happily. God, therefore, made it the first law to love him; and, which is all one, to worship him, to speak honour of him, and to express it in all our ways, the chief whereof is obedience. And this we find in the instance of that positive precept, which God gave to Adam, and which was nothing but a particular of the great general. But in this there is little scruple, because it is not imaginable, that God would,

in any period of time, not take care, that himself be honoured, his glory being the very end, why he made man; and therefore it must be certain, that this did, at the very first, pass into a law.

16. But concerning this and other things, which are usually called natural laws, I consider, that the things themselves were such, that the doing them was therefore declared to be a law, because the not doing them did certainly bring a punishment proportionable to the crime, that is, a just deficiency from the end of creation, from a good and happy life: 2. and also a punishment of a guilty conscience: which I do not understand to be a fear of hell, or of any supervening penalty, unless the conscience be accidentally instructed into such fears by experience or revelation; but it is a "malum in genere rationis," a disease or evil of the reasonable faculty; that, as there is a rare content in the discourses of reason, there is a satisfaction, an acquiescency, like that of creatures in their proper place, and definite actions, and competent perfections; so, in prevaricating the natural law, there is a dissatisfaction, a disease, a removing out of the place, an unquietness of spirit, even when there is no monitor or observer. "Adeò facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustrà præstantissimus [Plato] sapientiæ firmare solitus est, si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, posse aspici laniatus et ictus, quando ut corpora verberibus, ità sævitiâ, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur," said Tacitus[q] out of Plato[r], whose words are; *Ἀλλὰ πολλάκις τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἐπιλαβόμενος, ἢ ἄλλου ὁτουοῦν βασιλέως ἢ δυνάστου, κατεῖδεν οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς ὂν τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ διαμεμαστιγωμένην καὶ οὐλῶν μεστὴν, ὑπὸ ἐπιορκιῶν καὶ ἀδικίας.* It is naturally certain, that the cruelty of tyrants torments themselves, and is a hook in their nostrils, and a scourge to their spirit[s]; and the pungency of forbidden lust is truly a thorn in the flesh, full of anguish and secret vexation.

> Quid, demens, manifesta negas? En pectus inustæ
> Deformant maculæ, vitiisque inolevit imago,

said Claudian[t] of Rufinus. And it is certain to us, and

[q] Annal. vi. 6. [r] In Gorgia, § 61.

[s] Lucian. in Catapl. Rhadamanthus, *Ὁπόσα ἄν τις ὑμῶν πονηρὰ ἐργάσηται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει.* — *Bipont.* t. iii. p. 205.

[t] Claudian. de Rufin. lib. ii. 504.

verified by the experience and observation of all wise nations, though not naturally demonstrable, that this secret punishment is sharpened and promoted in degrees by the hand of Heaven, the finger of the same hand, that writ the law in our understandings.

17. But the prevarications of the natural law have also their portion of a special punishment, besides the scourge of an unquiet spirit. The man that disturbs his neighbour's rest, meets with disturbances himself: and since I have naturally no more power over my neighbour, than he hath over me, (unless he descended naturally from me,) he hath an equal privilege to defend himself, and to secure his quiet by disturbing the order of my happy living, as I do his. And this equal permission is certainly so great a sanction and signature of the law of justice, that, in the just proportion of my receding from the reasonable prosecution of my end, in the same proportion and degree my own infelicity is become certain; and this in several degrees up to the loss of all, that is, of life itself: for where no farther duration or differing state is known, there death is ordinarily esteemed the greatest infelicity; where something beyond it is known, there also it is known, that such prevarication makes that farther duration to be unhappy. So that an affront is naturally punished by an affront, the loss of a tooth with the loss of a tooth, of an eye with an eye, the violent taking away of another man's goods by the losing my own. For I am liable to as great an evil as I infer, and naturally he is not unjust, that inflicts it. And he that is drunk, is a fool or a madman for the time; and that is his punishment, and declares the law and the sin: and so in proportions to the transgressions of sobriety. But when the first of the natural laws is violated, that is, God is disobeyed or dishonoured, or when the greatest of natural evils is done to our neighbour, then death became the penalty: to the first, in the first period of the world; to the second, at the restitution of the world, that is, at the beginning of the second period. He that did attempt to kill, from the beginning of ages might have been resisted and killed, if the assaulted could not else be safe; but he that killed actually, as Cain did, could not be killed himself, till the law was made in Noah's time; because there was no person living, that had equal power on him, and had been

naturally injured. While the thing was doing, the assailant and the assailed had equal power; but when it was done, and one was killed, he that had the power or right of killing his murderer, is now dead, and his power is extinguished with the man. But after the flood, the power was put into the hand of some trusted person, who was to take the forfeiture. And thus, I conceive, these natural reasons, in order to their proper end, became laws, and bound fast by the band of annexed and consequent penalties. "Metum prorsus et noxiam conscientiæ pro fœdere haberi," said Tacitus[n]; and that fully explains my sense.

18. And thus death was brought into the world; not by every prevarication of any of the laws, by any instance of unreasonableness: for in proportion to the evil of the action would be the evil of the suffering, which in all cases would not arrive at death; as every injury, every intemperance, should not have been capital. But some things were made evil by a superinduced prohibition, as eating one kind of fruit; some things were evil by inordination: the first was morally evil, the second was evil naturally. Now the first sort brought in death by a prime sanction; the second, by degrees and variety of accident. For every disobedience and transgression of that law, which God made as the instance of our doing him honour and obedience, is an integral violation of all the band between him and us; it does not grow in degrees, according to the instance and subject matter; for it is as great a disobedience to eat, when he hath forbidden us, as to offer to climb to heaven with an ambitious tower. And therefore it is but reasonable for us to fear, and just in him to make us at once suffer death, which is the greatest of natural evils, for disobeying him: to which death we may arrive by degrees, in doing actions against the reasonableness of sobriety and justice, but cannot arrive by degrees of disobedience to God, or irreligion; because every such act deserves the worst of things, but the other naturally deserves no greater evil than the proportion of their own inordination, till God, by a superinduced law, hath made them also to become acts of disobedience as well as inordination, that is, morally evil, as well as naturally;

[n] Ann. vi. 4.

for "by the law," saith St. Paul, "sin became exceedingly sinful[w]," that is, had a new degree of obliquity added to it. But this was not at first. For therefore saith St. Paul, "Before," or "until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed, when there is no law[x]:" meaning, that those sins, which were forbidden by Moses's law, were actually in the manners of men and the customs of the world; but they were not imputed, that is, to such personal punishments and consequent evils, which afterwards those sins did introduce; because those sins, which were only evil by inordination, and discomposure of the order of man's end of living happily, were made unlawful upon no other stock, but that God would have man to live happily; and therefore gave him reason, to effect that end; and if a man became unreasonable, and did things contrary to his end, it was impossible for him to be happy; that is, he should be miserable in proportion. But in that degree and manner of evil they were imputed; and that was sanction enough to raise natural reason up to the constitution of a law.

19. Thirdly, the law of nature, being thus decreed and made obligatory, was a sufficient instrument of making man happy, that is, in producing the end of his creation. But as Adam had evil discourses and irregular appetites, before he fell, (for they made him fall,) and as the angels, who had no original sin, yet they chose evil at the first, when it was wholly arbitrary in them to do so or otherwise; so did man. "God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions." Some men were ambitious, and by incompetent means would make their brethren to be their servants; some were covetous, and would usurp that, which, by an earlier distinction, had passed into private possession: and then they made new principles, and new discourses, such which were reasonable in order to their private indirect ends, but not to the public benefit, and therefore would prove unreasonable and mischievous to themselves at last.

20. And when once they broke the order of creation, it is easy to understand, by what necessities of consequence they ran into many sins and irrational proceedings[y]. Ælian

[w] Rom. vii. 13. [x] Rom. v. 13.

[y] Τὰ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἐξηγέσατο, dixit Porphyrius.

tells of a nation, who had a law binding them to beat their parents to death with clubs, when they lived to a decrepit and unprofitable age. The Persian Magi mingled with their mothers and all their nearest relatives. And by a law of the Venetians, says Bodinus[z], a son in banishment was redeemed from the sentence, if he killed his banished father. And in Homer's time, there were a sort of pirates[a], who professed robbing, and did account it honourable. But the great prevarications of the laws of nature were in the first commandment; when the tradition concerning God was derived by a long line, and there were no visible remonstrances of an extraordinary power, they were quickly brought to believe, that he whom they saw not, was not at all, especially being prompted to it by pride, tyranny, and a loose imperious spirit[b]. Others fell to low opinions concerning God, and made such as they list of their own; and they were like to be strange gods, which were of man's making. When man, either maliciously or carelessly, became unreasonable in the things that concerned God, God was pleased to "give him over to a reprobate mind[c]," that is, an unreasonable understanding, and false principles concerning himself and his neighbour, that his sin against the natural law might become its own punishment, by discomposing his natural happiness. Atheism and idolatry brought in all unnatural lusts, and many unreasonable injustices. And this we learn from St. Paul: "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things, which are not convenient[d];" that is, incongruities towards the end of their creation; and so they became "full of unrighteousness, lust, covetousness, malice, envy, strife, and murder, disobedient to parents, breakers of covenants, unnatural in their affections," and in their passions: and all this was the consequent of breaking the first natural law. "They changed the truth of God into a lie: for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections[e]."

[z] De Rep. l. i. c. 4.

[a] Οὐκ ἄδοξον ἦν παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸ ληστεύειν, ἀλλ' ἐνδοξον.—*Scholiast. in Hom. Odyss. γ'.* Vide etiam *A. Gel.* l. xi. c. 18.

[b] Ὅσοι ἀπὸ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἐμπαιφορημένοι, καὶ ὑπὸ φαύλης ἀνατροφῆς καὶ ἐθῶν φαύλων καὶ νόμων πονηρῶν διαφθαρέντες τὰς φυσικὰς ἐννοίας ἀπώλεσαν.—*Just. Mart. Dial. Tryph.*

[c] Rom. i. 25, 26, &c. [d] Ver. 28, &c. [e] Ver. 25, 26.

21. Now God, who takes more care for the good of man, than man does for his own, did not only imprint these laws in the hearts and understandings of man, but did also take care to make this light shine clear enough to walk by, by adopting some instances of the natural laws into religion. Thus the law against murder became a part of religion in the time of Noah; and some other things were then added concerning worshipping God, against idolatry, and against unnatural and impure mixtures. Sometimes God superadded judgments, as to the 23,000 Assyrians for fornication. For although these punishments were not threatened to the crime in the sanction and expression of any definite law, and it could not naturally arrive to it by its inordination; yet it was as agreeable to the Divine justice to inflict it, as to inflict the pains of hell upon evil livers, who yet had not any revelation of such intolerable danger: for it was sufficient, that God had made such crimes to be against their very nature; and they who will do violence to their nature, to do themselves hurt, and to displease God, deserve to lose the title to all those good things, which God was pleased to design for man's final condition. And because it grew habitual, customary, and of innocent reputation, it pleased God to call this precept out of the darkness, whither their evil customs and false discourses had put it; and by such an extra-regular, but very signal punishment, to remind them, that the natural permissions of concubinate were only confined to the ends of mankind, and were hallowed only by the faith and the design of marriage. And this was signified by St. Paul, in these words: "They that sin without the law, shall also perish without the law[f];" that is, by such judgments, which God hath inflicted on evil livers in several periods of the world, irregularly indeed, not signified in kind, but yet sent into the world with designs of a great mercy; that the ignorances, and prevarications, and partial abolitions of the natural law, might be cured and restored, and by the dispersion of prejudices the state of natural reason be redintegrate.

22. Whatsoever was besides this, was accidental and emergent; such as were the discourses of wise men, which God raised up in several countries and ages, as Job, and

[f] Rom. ii. 12.

Eliphaz, and Bildad, and those of the families of the patriarchs dispersed into several countries; and constant tradition in some noble and more eminent descents. And yet all this was so little and imperfect, not in itself, but in respect of the thick cloud man had drawn before his understanding, that darkness covered the face of the earth in a great proportion. Almost all the world were idolaters; and when they had broken the first of the natural laws, the breach of the other was not only naturally consequent, but also, by Divine judgment, it descended infallibly. And yet God, pitying mankind, did not only still continue the former remedies, and added blessings, "giving them fruitful seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladness," so leaving the nations without excuse; but also made a very noble change in the world: for having chosen an excellent family, the fathers of which lived exactly according to the natural law, and with observation of those few superadded precepts, in which God did specificate their prime duty, having swelled that family to a great nation, and given them possession of an excellent land, which God took from seven nations, because they were egregious violators of the natural law, he was pleased to make a very great restitution and declaration of the natural law, in many instances of religion and justice, which he framed into positive precepts, and adopted them into the family of the first original instances, making them as necessary in the particulars, as they were in the primary obligation; but the instances were such, whereof some did relate only to the present constitution of the commonwealth; others to such universal contracts, which obliged all the world, by reason of the equal necessity of all mankind to admit them. And these himself writ on tables of stone, and dressed up their nation into a body politic by an excellent system of politic laws, and adorned it with a rare religion, and left this nation as a piece of leaven in a mass of dough, not only to do honour to God, and happiness to themselves, by those instruments, which he had now very much explicated, but also to transmit the same reasonable propositions into other nations: and he therefore multiplied them to a great necessity of a dispersion, that they might serve the ends of God and of the natural law, by their ambulatory life and their numerous disseminations. And

this was it, which St. Paul affirms, "The law was added because of transgression[s]:" meaning, that because men did transgress the natural, God brought Moses's law into the world, to be as a strand to the inundation of impiety. And thus the world stood, till the fulness of time was come: for so we are taught by the Apostle, "The law was added because of transgression;" but the date of this was to expire at a certain period, it was added to serve but "till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made."

23. For, because Moses's law was but an imperfect explication of the natural; there being divers parts of the three laws of nature not at all explicated by that covenant, not the religion of prayers, not the reasonableness of temperance and sobriety in opinion and diet; and in the more noble instances of humanity and doing benefit, it was so short, that, as St. Paul says, "The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect;" and, which was most of all considerable, it was confined to a nation; and the other parts of mankind had made so little use of the records of that nation, that all the world was placed "in darkness, and sate in the shadow of death:" therefore it was, that in great mercy God sent his Son, "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel:" to instruct those, and consummate these; that the imperfection of the one, and the mere darkness of the other, might be illustrated by the Sun of Righteousness. And this was by restoring the light of nature, which they by evil customs, and false principles, and evil laws, had obscured; by restoring man to the liberty of his spirit, by freeing him from the slavery of sin, under which they were so lost and oppressed, that all their discourses and conclusions, some of their moral philosophy, and all their habitual practices, were but servants of sin, and made to co-operate to that end, not which God intended as perfective of human nature, but which the devil and vicious persons superinduced, to serve little ends and irregular, and to destroy the greater.

24. For certain it is, Christianity is nothing else but the most perfect design that ever was, to make a man be happy in his whole capacity: and as the law was to the Jews, so was philosophy to the Gentiles, a schoolmaster to bring them

[s] Gal. iii. 19.

to Christ, to teach them the rudiments of happiness, and the first and lowest things of reason; that when Christ was come, all mankind might become perfect; that is, be made regular in their appetites, wise in their understandings, assisted in their duties, directed to, and instructed in, their great ends. And this is that, which the Apostle calls "being perfect men in Christ Jesus;" perfect in all the intendments of nature, and in all the designs of God. And this was brought to pass by discovering, and restoring, and improving the law of nature, and by turning it all into religion.

25. For the natural law being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being eternal and unalterable, (for it ought to be as lasting and as unchangeable as the nature itself, so long as it was capable of a law,) it was not imaginable, that the body of any law should make a new morality, new rules, and general proportions, either of justice, or religion, or temperance, or felicity; the essential parts of all these consisting in natural proportions and means toward the consummation of man's last end, which was first intended, and is always the same. It is, as if there were a new truth in an essential and a necessary proposition. For although the instances may vary, there can be no new justice, no new temperance, no new relations, proper and natural relations and intercourses, between God and us; but what always were in praises and prayers, in adoration and honour, and in the symbolical expressions of God's glory and our needs.

26. Hence it comes, that that, which is the most obvious and notorious appellative of the law of nature, that it is "a law written in our hearts," was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of Christianity. Plutarch, saying that "Kings ought to be governed by laws," explains himself, that this law must be "a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the mind, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners, and monitors of their life[h]." And this was the same, which St. Paul expresses to be the guide of the Gentiles, that is, of all men naturally. "The Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in

[h] Οὐκ ἐν βιβλίοις ἔξω γεγραμμένος, οὐδὲ ἐν ξύλοις, ἀλλ' ἔμψυχος ὢν ἑαυτῷ λόγος, ἀεὶ συνοικῶν, καὶ μηδέποτε τὴν ψυχὴν ἐῶν ἔρημον κηδεμονίας.

the law; which shows the work of the law written in their hearts[i]." And that we may see it was the law of nature, that returned in the sanctions of Christianity, God declares, that, in the constitution of this law, he would take no other course than at first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men: indeed with a new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy Dove; the Spirit of God was to be the great engraver and the scribe of the new covenant, but the hearts of men should be the tables. "For this is the covenant, that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them: and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more[k]:" that is, I will provide a means to expiate all the iniquities of man, and restore him to the condition of his first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity, which I first designed to him, and that also by the same instruments. Now I consider, that the Spirit of God took very great care, that all the records of the law of Jesus should be carefully kept and transmitted to posterity in books and sermons; which, being an act of providence and mercy, was a provision, lest they should be lost or mistaken, as they were formerly, when God writ some of them in tables of stone for the use of the sons of Israel, and all of them in the first tables of nature with the finger of creation, as now he did in the new creature, by the finger of the Spirit. But then, writing them in the tables of our minds besides the other, can mean nothing but placing them there, where they were before, and from whence we blotted them by the mixtures of impure principles and discourses. But I descend to particular and more minute considerations.

27. The laws of nature either are bands of religion, justice, or sobriety. Now I consider concerning religion, that whenever God hath made any particular precepts to a family, as to Abraham's; or to a single person, as to the man of Judah prophesying against the altar of Bethel; or to a nation, as to the Jews at Sinai; or to all mankind, as to the world descending from Noah; it was nothing else but a trial or an instance of our obedience, a particular prosecution of the law of nature, whereby we are obliged to do honour to God,

[i] Rom. ii. 14. [k] Heb. x. 16, 17.

which was to be done by such expressions, which are natural intercourses between God and us, or such as he hath made to be so. Now in Christianity we are wholly left to that manner of prosecuting this first natural law, which is natural and proportionable to the nature of the thing, which the holy Jesus calls "worshipping God in spirit and truth:" in spirit, that is, with our souls heartily and devoutly, so as to exclude hypocrisy and indifferency; and in truth, that is, without a lie, without vain imaginations and phantastic resemblances of him, which were introduced by the evil customs of the Gentiles, and without such false guises and absurd indecencies, which, as they are contrary to man's reason, so are they contrary to the glory and reputation of God[1]; such as was that universal custom of all nations, of sacrificing in man's blood, and offering festival-lusts and impurities in the solemnities of their religion; for these being against the purpose and design of God, and against right reason, are a lie, and enemies to the truth of a natural and proper religion. The holy Jesus only commanded us to pray often, and to praise God, to speak honour of his name, not to use it lightly and vainly, to believe him, to revere the instruments and ministers of religion, to ask for what we need, to put our trust in God, to worship him, to obey him, and to love him; for all these are but the expressions of love. And this is all Christ spake concerning the first natural law, the law of religion. For concerning the ceremonies or sacraments, which he instituted, they are but few, and they become matter of duty but by accident; as being instruments and rites of consigning those effects and mercies, which God sent to the world by the means of this law, and relate rather to the contract and stipulation, which Christ made for us, than to the natural order between duty and felicity.

28. Now all these are nothing but what we are taught by natural reason, that is, what God enabled us to understand, to be fit instruments of intercourse between God and us, and what was practised and taught by sober men in all ages and all nations, whose records we have received, as I shall remark at the margent of the several precepts. For to make these appear certainly and naturally necessary, there was no more

[1] Polyd. Virg. de Invent. l. v. c. 8.

requisite, but that man should know there was a God, that is, an eternal Being, which gave him all that he had or was; and to know what himself was, that is, indigent and necessitous of himself, needing help of all the creatures, exposed to accidents and calamity, and defensible no ways but by the same hand that made him; creation and conservation, in the philosophy of all the world, being but the same act, continuing and flowing on him from an instant to duration, as a line from its mathematical point. And for this God took sufficient care; for he conversed with man, in the very first, in such clear, and certain, and perceptible transaction, that a man could as certainly know that God was, as that man was. And in all ages of the world he hath not left himself without witness, but gave such testimonies of himself that were sufficient; for they did actually persuade all nations, barbarous and civil, into the belief of a God[m]. And it is but a nicety to consider, whether or no that proposition can be naturally demonstrated. For it was sufficient to all God's purposes and to all man's, that the proposition was actually believed; the instances were therefore sufficient to make faith, because they did it. And a man may remove himself so far from all the degrees of aptness to believe a proposition, that nothing shall make them join. For if there were a sect of witty men, that durst not believe their senses, because they thought them fallible, it is no wonder, if some men should think every reason reprovable. But in such cases demonstration is a relative term, and signifies every probation, greater or lesser, which does actually make faith in any proposition; and in this God hath never been deficient, but hath to all men, that believe him, given sufficient to confirm them; to those few, that believed not, sufficient to reprove them.

29. Now in all these actions of religion, which are naturally consequent to this belief, there is no scruple, but in the instance of faith, which is presented to be an infused grace, an immission from God, and that for its object it hath principles supernatural, that is, naturally incredible; and therefore, faith is supposed a grace above the greatest strength

[m] Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. Ταῦτα ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος.—p. 6. ed. Dav.

of reason. But in this I consider, that, if we look into all the sermons of Christ[n], we shall not easily find any doctrine, that, in any sense, troubles natural philosophy, but only that of the resurrection: (for I do not think those mystical expressions of plain truths, such as are, "being born again, eating the flesh of the Son of Man, being in the Father, and the Father in him," to be exceptions in this assertion.) And although some Gentiles did believe and deliver that article, and particularly Chrysippus, and the Thracians, (as Mela and Solinus report of them;) yet they could not naturally discourse themselves into it, but had it from the imperfect report and opinion of some Jews, that dwelt among them: and it was certainly a revelation or a proposition, sent into the world by God. But then the believing it is so far from being above or against nature, that there is nothing in the world more reasonable, than to believe any thing, which God tells us, or which is told us by a man sent from God, with mighty demonstration of his power and veracity. Naturally our bodies cannot rise, that is, there is no natural agent or natural cause sufficient to produce that effect; but this is an effect of a Divine power: and he hath but a little stock of natural reason, who cannot conclude, that the same power, which made us out of nothing, can also restore us to the same condition, as well and easily, from dust and ashes certainly, as from mere nothing. And in this, and in all the like cases, faith is a submission of the understanding to the word of God, and is nothing else but a confessing, that God is truth, and that he is omnipotent; that is, he can do what he will, and he will, when he hath once said it. And we are now as ignorant of the essence and nature of forms, and of that, which substantially distinguishes man from man, or an angel from an angel, as we were of the greatest article of our religion, before it was revealed; and we shall remain ignorant for ever of many natural things, unless they be revealed; and unless we knew all the secrets of philosophy, the mysteries of nature, and the rules and propositions of all things and all creatures, we are fools, if we say, that what we call an article of faith, I mean, truly such, is against natural reason. It may be indeed as much against our natural

[n] Apud Lactant. l. vii. c. 23.

reasonings, as those reasonings are against truth. But if we remember, how great an ignorance dwells upon us all, it will be found the most reasonable thing in the world only to inquire, whether God hath revealed any such proposition; and then not to say, It is against natural reason, and therefore an article of faith; but I am told a truth, which I knew not till now, and so my reason is become instructed into a new proposition. And although Christ hath given us no new moral precepts, but such which were essentially and naturally reasonable, in order to the end of man's creation; yet we may easily suppose him to teach us many a new truth, which we knew not, and to explicate to us many particulars of that estate, which God designed for man in his first production, but yet did not then declare to him; and to furnish him with new revelations, and to signify the greatness of the designed end, to become so many arguments of endearment to secure his duty, that is, indeed, to secure his happiness by the infallible using the instruments of attaining it.

30. This is all I am to say concerning the precepts of religion Jesus taught us: he took off those many superinduced rites, which God enjoined to the Jews, and reduced us to the natural religion; that is, to such expressions of duty, which all wise men and nations used; save only, that he took away the rite of sacrificing beasts [o], because it was now determined in the great sacrifice of himself, which sufficiently and eternally reconciled all the world to God. All the other things, as prayers, and adoration, and eucharist, and faith in God, are of a natural order and an unalterable expression: and, in the nature of the thing, there is no other way of address to God than these, no other expression of his glories and our needs; both which must for ever be signified.

31. Secondly; concerning the second natural precept, Christian religion hath also added nothing beyond the first obligation, but explained it all: "Whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye so to them [p];" that is the eternal rule of justice; and that binds contracts, keeps promises, affirms truth, makes subjects obedient, and princes just; it gives

[o] Just. Mart. Resp. ad Orthodox. ad qu. 83. Tertul. adv. Marcion. ii. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, l. iii. c. 32.

[p] Hæc sententia sæpissimè à Severo Imperatore prolata. Ὁ μισῶς, μηδενὶ ποιήσεις, *Tob.* iv. 16. Dixit Mimus, "Ab alio exspectes, alteri quod feceris."

security to marts and banks, and introduces an equality of condition upon all the world, save only when an inequality is necessary, that is, in the relations of government, for the preservation of the common[q] rights of equal titles and possessions, that there be some common term endued with power, who is to be the father of all men by an equal provision, that every man's rights be secured by that fear, which naturally we shall bear to him, who can, and will, punish all unreasonable and unjust violations of property. And concerning this also, the holy Jesus hath added an express precept of paying tribute, and all Cæsar's dues, to Cæsar: in all other particulars, it is necessary, that the instances and minutes of justice be appointed by the laws and customs of the several kingdoms and republics. And therefore it was, that Christianity so well combined with the government of heathen princes[r]; because, whatsoever was naturally just, or declared so by the political power, their religion bound them to observe, making obedience to be a double duty, a duty both of justice and religion: and the societies of Christians growing up from conventicles to assemblies, from assemblies to societies, introduced no change in the government; but by little and little turned the commonwealth into a church, till the world being Christian, and justice also being religion, obedience to princes, observation of laws, honesty in contracts, faithfulness in promises, gratitude to benefactors, simplicity in discourse, and ingenuity in all pretences and transactions, became the characterisms of Christian men, and the word of a Christian the greatest solemnity of stipulation in the world.

32. But concerning the general, I consider, that, in two very great instances, it was remonstrated, that Christianity was the greatest prosecution of natural justice and equality in the whole world. The one was in an election of an apostle into the place of Judas: when there were two equal candidates of the same pretension and capacity, the question was determined by lots, which naturally was the arbitration in questions, whose parts were wholly indifferent; and as it

[q] Singulorum interest, si universi regantur.

[r] Nec natura potest justo secernere iniquum,
Dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis.—*Hor.* l. i. *Sat.* 3.

was used in all times, so it is to this day used with us in many places, where, lest there be a disagreement concerning the manner of tithing some creatures, and to prevent unequal arts and unjust practices, they are tithed by lot, and their fortuitous passing through the door of their fold. The other is in the cenobitic life of the first Christians and apostles: they had all things in common, which was that state of nature, in which men lived charitably and without injustice, before the distinction of dominions and private rights. But from this manner of life they were soon driven, by the public necessity and constitution of affairs.

33. Thirdly; whatsoever else is in the Christian law, concerns the natural precept of sobriety, in which there is some variety and some difficulty. In the matter of carnality, the holy Jesus did clearly reduce us to the first institution of marriage in Paradise, allowing no other mixture, but what was first intended in the creation and first sacramental union: and in the instance he so permitted us to the natural law, that he was pleased to mention no instance of forbidden lust, but in general and comprehensive terms of adultery and fornication: in the other, which are still more unnatural, as their names are concealed and hidden in shame and secrecy, we are to have no instructor, but the modesty and order of nature.

34. As an instance of this law of sobriety, Christ superadded the whole doctrine of humility, which Moses did not, and which seemed almost to be extinguished in the world; and it is called by St. Paul, "sapere ad sobrietatem," the reasonableness or wisdom of sobriety. And it is all the reason in the world, that a man should think of himself, but just as he is. He is deceived, that thinks otherwise, and is a fool. And when we consider, that pride makes wars, and causes affronts, and no man loves a proud man, and he loves no man but himself and his flatterers, we shall understand, that the precept of humility is an excellent art, and a happy instrument towards human felicity. And it is no way contradicted by a natural desire of honour; it only appoints just and reasonable ways of obtaining it. We are not forbidden to receive honour; but to seek it for designs of pride and complacency, or to make it rest in our hearts. But when the hand of virtue receives the honour, and transmits it to

God from our own head, the desires of nature are sufficiently satisfied, and nothing of religion contradicted. And it is certain, by all the experience of the world, that in every state and order of men, he, that is most humble in proportion to that state, is (if all things else be symbolical) the most honoured person. For it is very observable, that when God designed man to a good and happy life, as the natural end of his creation, to verify this, God was pleased to give him objects sufficient and apt to satisfy every appetite; I say, to satisfy it naturally, not to satisfy those extravagancies, which might be accidental, and procured by the irregularity either of will or understanding*; not to answer him in all that his desires could extend to, but to satisfy the necessity of every appetite; all the desires that God made, not all that man should make. For we see, even in those appetites which are common to men and beasts, all the needs of nature, and all the ends of creation are served, by the taking such proportions of their objects, which are ordinate to their end, and which in man we call temperance, (not as much as they naturally can;) such as are mixtures of sexes merely for production of their kind, eating and drinking for needs and hunger. And yet God permitted our appetites to be able to extend beyond the limits of the mere natural design, that God, by restraining them, and putting the fetters of laws upon them, might turn natural desires into sobriety, and sobriety into religion, they becoming servants of the commandment. And now we must not call all those swellings of appetites natural inclination, nor the satisfaction of such tumours and excrescencies any part of natural felicities: but that, which does just co-operate to those ends, which perfect human nature in order to its proper end. For the appetites of meat, and drink, and pleasures, are but intermedial and instrumental to the end, and are not made for themselves, but first for the end, and then to serve God in the instances of obedience. And just so is the natural desire of honour intended to be a spur to virtue, (for to virtue only it is naturally consequent, or to natural and political superiority:)

* Vina sitim sedant, natis Venus alma creandis
Serviat: hos fines transiliisse nocet.—*Virg.*

'Ο μὲν τὰς ὑπερβολὰς διώκων τῶν ἡδέων, ἢ καθ' ὑπερβολὰς, ἢ διὰ προαιρέσεως, καὶ δι' αὐτὰς, καὶ μηδὲν δι' ἕτερον ἀποβαίνων, ἀκόλαστος.—*Arist. Ethic.* l. vii. c. 7. p. 294. ed. Wilk.

but to desire it beyond, or besides, the limit, is the swelling and the disease of the desire. And we can take no rule for its perfect value, but by the strict limits of the natural end, or the superinduced end of religion in positive restraints.

35. According to this discourse we may best understand, that even the severest precepts of the Christian law are very consonant to nature and the first laws of mankind. Such is the precept of self-denial, which is nothing else but a confining the appetites within the limits of nature: for there they are permitted, (except when some greater purpose is to be served, than the present answering the particular desire,) and whatsoever is beyond it, is not in the natural order to felicity; it is no better than an itch, which must be scratched and satisfied, but it is unnatural. But, for martyrdom itself, quitting our goods, losing lands, or any temporal interest, they are now become as reasonable in the present constitution of the world, as taking unpleasant potions, and suffering a member to be cauterized, in sickness or disease. And we see, that death is naturally a less evil than a continual torment, and by some not so resented as a great disgrace; and some persons have chosen it for sanctuary and remedy: and therefore, much rather shall it be accounted prudent and reasonable, and agreeable to the most perfect desires of nature, to exchange a house for a hundred, a friend for a patron, a short affliction for a lasting joy, and a temporal death for an eternal life. For so the question is stated to us by Him, that understands it best. True it is, that the suffering of losses, afflictions, and death, is naturally an evil, and therefore no part of a natural precept, or prime injunction. But when, God having commanded instances of religion, man will not suffer us to obey God, or will not suffer us to live, then the question is, Which is most agreeable to the most perfect and reasonable desires of nature, to obey God, or to obey man; to fear God, or to fear man; to preserve our bodies, or to preserve our souls; to secure a few years of uncertain and troublesome duration, or an eternity of a very glorious condition? Some men, reasonably enough, choose to die for considerations lower than that of a happy eternity; therefore death is not such an evil, but that it may, in some cases, be desired and reasonably chosen, and, in some, be recompensed at the highest rate of a natural value: and if

by accident we happen into an estate, in which of necessity one evil or another must be suffered, certainly nothing is more naturally reasonable and eligible than to choose the least evil; and when there are two good things propounded to our choice, both which cannot be possessed, nothing is more certainly the object of a prudent choice than the greater good. And therefore, when once we understand the question of suffering, and self-denial, and martyrdom to this sense, as all Christians do, and all wise men do, and all sects of men do in their several persuasions, it is but remembering, that to live happily after this life is more intended to us by God, and is more perfective of human nature, than to live here with all the prosperity, which this state affords; and it will evidently follow, that when violent men will not let us enter into that condition by the ways of nature and prime intendment, that is, of natural religion, justice, and sobriety, it is made, in that case, and upon that supposition, certainly, naturally, and infallibly reasonable, to secure the perfective and principal design of our felicity, though it be by such instruments, which are as unpleasant to our senses, as are the instruments of our restitution to health; since both one and the other, in the present conjunction and state of affairs, are most proportionable to reason, because they are so to the present necessity; not primarily intended to us by God, but superinduced by evil accidents and the violence of men. And we not only find, that Socrates suffered death in attestation of a God, though he flattered and discoursed himself into the belief of an immortal reward, " de industria consultæ æquanimitatis, non de fiducia compertæ veritatis," as Tertullian says of him; but we also find, that all men, that believed the immortality of the soul firmly and unmovably, made no scruple of exchanging their life for the preservation of virtue, with the interest of their great hope, for honour sometimes, and oftentimes for their country.

36. Thus the holy Jesus perfected and restored the natural law, and drew it into a system of propositions, and made them to become of the family of religion. For God is so zealous to have man attain to the end, to which he first designed him, that those things, which he hath put in the natural order to attain that end, he hath bound fast upon us, not only by the order of things, by which it was that he, that

prevaricated, did naturally fall short of felicity, but also by bands of religion; he hath now made himself a party and an enemy to those, that will not be happy. Of old, religion was but one of the natural laws, and the instances of religion were distinct from the discourses of philosophy. Now, all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to God we are tied to do all that is reason; and the parts of our religion are but pursuances of the natural relation between God and us: and beyond all this, our natural condition is, in all senses, improved by the consequents and adherencies of this religion. For although nature and grace are opposite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance, and ungodly customs, is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the Gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the Spirit; yet it is observable, that the law of nature and the law of grace are never opposed. "There is a law of our members[t]," saith St. Paul; that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites, by perpetual evil customs, examples and traditions of vanity; and there is a law of sin, that answers to this: and they differ only as inclination and habit, vicious desires and vicious practices. But then contrary to these are, first, "a law of my mind[u]," which is the law of nature and right reason, and then the law of grace, that is, of Jesus Christ, who perfected and restored the first law, and by assistances reduced it into a law of holy living: and these two differ as the other; the one is in order to the other, as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection and consummation. The law of the mind had been so rased and obliterate, and we, by some means or other, so disabled from observing it exactly, that until it was turned into the law of grace, (which is a law of pardoning infirmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections,) we were in a state of deficiency from the perfective state of man, to which God intended us.

37. Now, although God always designed man to the same state, which he hath now revealed by Jesus Christ, yet he told him not of it; and his permissions and licenses were then greater, and the law itself lay closer folded up in the

[t] Rom. vii. 23. [u] Ibid.

compact body of necessary propositions, in order to so much of his end, as was known, or could be supposed. But now, according to the extension of the revelation, the law itself is made wider, that is, more explicit; and natural reason is thrust forward into discourses of charity and benefit, and we tied to do very much good to others, and tied to co-operate to each other's felicity.

38. That the law of charity is a law of nature, needs no other argument but the consideration of the first constitution of man. The first instances of justice or intercourse of man with a second or third person, were to such persons, towards whom he had the greatest endearments of affection in the world, a wife and children; and justice and charity, at first, was the same thing. And it hath obtained in ages far removed from the first, that charity is called righteousness[x]: "He hath dispersed and given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever[y]." And it is certain, Adam could not in any instance be unjust, but he must in the same also be uncharitable; the band of his first justice being the ties of love, and all having commenced in love. And our blessed Lord, restoring all to the intention of the first perfection, expresses it to the same sense, as I formerly observed; justice to our neighbour, is loving him as ourselves. For, since justice obliges us to do, as we would be done to, as the irascible faculty restrains us from doing evil for fear of receiving evil, so the concupiscible obliges us to charity, that ourselves may receive good.

39. I shall say nothing concerning the reasonableness of this precept, but that it concurs rarely with the first reasonable appetite of man, of being like God. "Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via," said Pliny; and, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore the commandment of charity, in all its parts, is a design not only to reconcile the most miserable person to some participations and sense of felicity, but to make the charitable man happy; and whether this be not very agreeable to the desires of an intelligent nature, needs no farther inquiry. And Aristotle, asking the question, Whether a man had more need of friends in prosper-

[x] Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐπιχαριτικὸς πέφυκε.—*M. Anton.* l. ix. [y] Psal. cxii. 9.

ity or adversity? makes the case equal: Ὅτε γὰρ ἀτυχοῦντες δέονται ἐπικουρίας· οἱ δὲ εὐτυχοῦντες συμβίων, οὓς εὐποιήσωσιν. "When they are in want, they need assistance; when they are prosperous, they need partners of their felicity, that, by communicating their joy to them, it may reflect and double upon their spirits." And certain it is, there is no greater felicity in the world, than in the content that results from the emanations of charity. And this is that, which St. John[z] calls "the old commandment," and "the new commandment." It was of old, for it was from the beginning[a], even in nature, and to the offices of which our very bodies had an organ and a seat; for therefore nature gave to a man bowels and the passion of yearning; but it grew up into religion by parts, and was made perfect, and, in that degree, appropriate to the law of Jesus Christ. For so the holy Jesus became our lawgiver, and added many new precepts over and above what were in the law of Moses, but not more than was in the law of nature. The reason of both is, what I have all this while discoursed of: Christ made a more perfect restitution of the law of nature, than Moses did, and so it became the second Adam to consummate that, which began to be less perfect, from the prevarication of the first Adam.

40. A particular of the precept of charity is forgiving injuries; and besides that it hath many superinduced benefits, by way of blessing and reward, it relies also upon this natural reason, that a pure and a simple revenge does no way restore man towards the felicity, which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is a doing a simple evil, and does not, in its formality, imply reparation; for the mere repeating of our own right is permitted to them, that will do it by charitable instruments; and to secure myself or the public against the future, by positive inflictions upon the injurious, (if I be not

[z] 1 John, ii. 7, 8.

[a] ——Ἀνδρα δ' ὠφελεῖν, ἀφ' ὧν
Ἔχοι τι καὶ δύναιτο, κάλλιστος πόνος.— *Sophocl. Œdip. Tyr.* 314.

—— Hoc reges habent
Magnificum et ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies;
Prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare
Protegere—— *Senec. Med.* 222. *Schr.*

—— Mollissima corda
Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,
Quæ lacrymas dedit; hæc nostri pars optima sensûs.
Juven. Sat. 15. 131.

judge myself,) is also within the moderation of an unblamable defence, (unless some accidents or circumstances vary the case;) but forgiving injuries is a separating the malice from the wrong, the transient act from the permanent effect; and it is certain, the act which is passed, cannot be rescinded; the effect may; and if it cannot, it does no way alleviate the evil of the accident, that I draw him, that caused it, into as great a misery: since every evil, happening in the world, is the proper object of pity, which is in some sense afflictive; and therefore, unless we become unnatural and without bowels, it is most unreasonable, that we should increase our own afflictions by introducing a new misery, and making a new object of pity. All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for, without it, we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil, that no way co-operates towards the proper and perfective end of human nature. And he is a miserable person, whose good is the evil of his neighbour[b]; and he, that revenges, in many cases, does worse than he, that did the injury; in all cases, as bad. For if the first injury was an injustice to serve an end of an advantage and real benefit; then my revenge, which is abstracted, and of a consideration separate and distinct from the reparation, is worse; for I do him evil, without doing myself any real good; which he did not, for he received advantage by it. But if the first injury was matter of mere malice without advantage, yet it is no worse than revenge, for that is just so; and there is as much fantastic pleasure in doing a spite, as in doing revenge: they are both but like the pleasures of eating coals, and toads, and vipers. And certain it is, if a man, upon his private stock, could be permitted to revenge, the evil would be

[b] Ὁ τιμωρῶν τοῦ προϋπάρξαντος ἀδικώτερος. — *Maxim. Tyrius in Dissert. an referenda sit Injuria*, p. 26. ed. Dav.

Ἅπαντα τὰ ζῶ' ἐστι μακαριώτερα,
Καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντα μᾶλλον ἀνθρώπου πολύ.
Τὸν ὄνον ὁρᾷν ἔξεστι πρῶτα τουτονί.
Τούτῳ κακὸν δι' αὐτὸν οὐδὲν γίγνεται.
Ἡμεῖς δὲ, χωρὶς τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν,
Αὐτοὶ παρ' αὐτῶν ἕτερα προσπορίζομεν.
Λυπούμεθ', ἂν πτάρῃ τις· ἂν εἴπῃ κακῶς,
Ὀργιζόμεθ'· ἂν ἴδῃ τις ἐνύπνιον, σφόδρα
Φοβούμεθ'· ἂν γλαὺξ ἀνακράγῃ, δεδοίκαμεν.

Menand. p. 244. ed. Clerc.

immortal. And it is rarely well discoursed by Tyndarus in Euripides: "If the angry wife shall kill her husband, the son shall revenge his father's death, and kill his mother, and then the brother shall kill his mother's murderer, and he also will meet with an avenger for killing his brother."

Πέρας δὴ ποῖ κακῶν προβήσεται[c];

"What end shall there be to such" inhuman and "sad accidents?" If in this there be injustice, it is against natural reason; and, if it be evil, and disorders the felicity and security of society, it is also against natural reason: but if it be just, it is a strange justice, that is made up of so many inhumanities.

41. And now, if any man pretends specially to reason, to the ordinate desires and perfections of nature, and the sober discourses of philosophy, here is in Christianity, and no where else, enough to satisfy and inform his reason, to perfect his nature, and to reduce to act all the propositions of an intelligent and wise spirit. And the Holy Ghost is promised and given in our religion, to be an eternal band to keep our reason from returning to the darknesses of the old creation, and to promote the ends of our natural and proper felicity. For it is not a vain thing, that St. Paul reckons helps, and governments, and healings, to be fruits of the Spirit. For, since the two greatest blessings of the world, personal and political, consist, that in health, this in government[d]; and the ends of human felicity are served in nothing greater for the present interval, than in these two; Christ did not only enjoin rare prescriptions of health, such as are fasting, temperance, chastity, and sobriety, and all the great endearments of government, (and, unless they be sacredly observed, man is infinitely miserable;) but also hath given his Spirit, that is, extraordinary aids to the promoting these two, and facilitating the work of nature; that (as St. Paul says at the end of a discourse to this very purpose) "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us[e]."

[c] Eurip. Orest. 504. Pors.

[d] Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat, acceptius, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur.—*Cicer. Somn. Scipion.* sec. 3. ed. Tooly.

[e] 2 Cor. iv. 7.

42. I shall add nothing but this single consideration: God said to the children of Israel, "Ye are a royal priesthood[f]," a kingdom of priests: which was therefore true, because God reigned by the priests, and the priests' lips did then preserve knowledge, and the people were to receive the law from their mouths; for God having, by laws of his own, established religion and the republic, did govern by the rule of the law, and the ministry of the priests. The priests said, "Thus saith the Lord;" and the people obeyed. And these very words are spoken to the Christian church: "Ye are a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him, that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." That is, God reigns over all Christendom, just as he did over the Jews. He hath now so given to them and restored respectively all those reasonable laws, which are in order to all good ends, personal, economical, and political, that if men will suffer Christian religion to do its last intention, if men will live according to it, there needs no other coercion of laws or power of the sword. The laws of God, revealed by Christ, are sufficient to make all societies of men happy; and over all good men God reigns by his ministers, by the preaching of the word. And this was most evident in the three first ages of the church, in which all Christian societies were, for all their proper intercourses, perfectly guided, not by the authority and compulsion, but by the sermons of their spiritual guides; insomuch that St. Paul sharply reprehends the Corinthians, that "brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers;" as if he had said, "Ye will not suffer Christ to be your Judge, and his law to be your rule:" which indeed was a great fault among them, not only because they had so excellent a law, so clearly described, (or, where they might doubt, they had infallible interpreters,) so reasonable and profitable, so evidently concurring to their mutual felicity; but also because God did design Jesus to be their King, to reign over them by spiritual regiment, as himself did over the Jews, till they chose a king. And when the emperors

[f] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

became Christian, the case was no otherwise altered, but that the princes themselves, submitting to Christ's yoke, were (as all other Christians are), for their proportion, to be governed by the royal priesthood, that is, by the word preached by apostolical persons, the political interest remaining as before, save that, by being submitted to the laws of Christ, it received this advantage, that all justice was turned to be religion, and became necessary, and bound upon the conscience by Divinity. And when it happens, that a kingdom is converted to Christianity, the commonwealth is made a church, and Gentile priests are Christian bishops, and the subjects of the kingdom are servants of Christ, the religion of the nation is turned Christian, and the law of the nation made a part of the religion; there is no change of government, but that Christ is made King, and the temporal power is his substitute, and is to promote the interest of obedience to him, as before he did to Christ's enemy; Christ having left his ministers as lieger ambassadors, to signify and publish the laws of Jesus, to pray all, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God; so that, over the obedient, Christ wholly reigns by his ministers publishing his laws; over the disobedient, by the prince also putting those laws in execution. And in this sense it is, that St. Paul says, " Bonis lex non est posita;" " To such (who live after the Spirit) there is no law;" that is, there needs no coercion. But now, if we reject God from reigning over us, and say, like the people in the Gospel, " Nolumus hunc regnare," " We will not have him to reign over us," by the ministry of his word, by the empire of the royal priesthood, then we return to the condition of heathens, and persons sitting in darkness; then God hath armed the temporal power with a sword to cut us off. If we obey not God, speaking by his ministers, that is, if we live not according to the excellent laws of Christianity, that is, holily, soberly, and justly in all our relations, he hath placed three swords against us; the sword of the Spirit, against the unholy and irreligious; the sword of natural and supervening infelicities, upon the intemperate and unsober; and the sword of kings, against the unjust; to remonstrate the excellency of Christianity, and how certainly it leads to

all the felicity of man; because every transgression of this law, according to its proportion, makes men unhappy and unfortunate.

43. What effect this discourse may have, I know not; I intended it to do honour to Christianity, and to represent it to be the best religion in the world, and the conjugation of all excellent things, that were in any religion, or in any philosophy, or in any discourses. For "whatsoever was honest, whatsoever was noble, whatsoever was wise, whatsoever was of good report, if there be any praise, if there be any virtue[s]," it is in Christianity: for even to follow all these instances of excellency, is a precept of Christianity. And methinks, they, that pretend to reason, cannot more reasonably endear themselves to the reputation of reason, than by endearing their reason to Christianity; the conclusions and belief of which is the most reasonable and perfect, the most excellent design, and complying with the noblest and most proper ends of man. And if this gate may suffice to invite such persons into the recesses of the religion, then I shall tell them, that I have dressed it in the ensuing books with some variety: and as the nature of the religion is, some parts whereof are apt to satisfy our discourse, some to move our affections, and yet all of this to relate to practice; so is the design of the following pages. For some men are wholly made up of passion, and their very religion is but passion, put into the family and society of holy purposes; and, for those, I have prepared considerations upon the special parts of the life of the holy Jesus: and yet there also are some things, mingled in the least severe and most affectionate parts, which may help to answer a question, and appease a scruple, and may give rule for determination of many cases of conscience. For I have so ordered the considerations, that they spend not themselves in mere affections and ineffective passions, but they are made doctrinal and little repositories of duty. But because of the variety of men's spirits and of men's necessities, it was necessary I should interpose some practical discourses more severe: for it is but a sad thought to consider, that piety and books of devotion are counted

[s] Phil. iv. 8.

but entertainment for little understandings and softer spirits; and although there is much fault in such imperious minds, that they will not distinguish the weakness of the writers from the reasonableness and wisdom of the religion; yet I cannot but think, the books themselves are, in a large degree, the occasion of so great indevotion; because they are (some few excepted) represented naked in the conclusions of spiritual life, without or art or learning, and made apt for persons, who can do nothing but believe and love; not for them, that can consider and love. And it is not well, that, since nothing is more reasonable and excellent in all perfections spiritual than the doctrines of the Spirit, or holy life; yet nothing is offered to us so unlearnedly as this is, so miserable and empty of all its own intellectual perfections. If I could, I would have had it otherwise in the present books; for, since the understanding is not an idle faculty in a spiritual life, but hugely operative to all excellent and reasonable choices, it were very fit, that this faculty were also entertained by such discourses, which God intended as instruments of hallowing it, as he intended it towards the sanctification of the whole man. For want of it, busy and active men entertain themselves with notions infinitely unsatisfying and unprofitable: but, in the mean time, they are not so wise; for, concerning those, that study unprofitable notions, and neglect not only that which is wisest, but that also which is of most real advantage, I cannot but think, as Aristotle did of Thales and Anaxagoras, that "They may be learned, but they are not wise; or wise, but not prudent, when they are ignorant of such things, as are profitable to them: for, suppose they know the wonders of nature, and the subtilties of metaphysics, and operations mathematical; yet they cannot be prudent, who spend themselves wholly upon unprofitable and ineffective contemplations[h]." He is truly wise, that knows best to promote the best end, that which he is bound to desire; and is happy if he obtains, and miserable if he misses; and that is the end of a happy eternity, which is obtained by

[h] Διὸ Ἀναξαγόραν, καὶ Θαλῆν, καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους, σοφοὺς μὲν, φρονίμους δ' οὔ φασιν εἶναι, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἀγνοοῦντας τὰ συμφέροντ' αὐτοῖς· καὶ περιττὰ μὲν, καὶ θαυμαστὰ, καὶ χαλεπὰ, καὶ δαιμόνια εἰδέναι αὐτούς φασιν· ἄχρηστα δ', ὅτι οὐ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀγαθὰ ζητοῦσιν.—*Arist.* l. vi. *Eth.* cap. 7. p. 244. ed. Wilk.

the only means of living according to the purposes of God, and the prime intentions of nature; natural and prime reason being now all one with the Christian religion. But then I shall only observe, that this part of wisdom, and the excellency of its secret and deep reason, is not to be discerned but by experience; the propositions of this philosophy being (as in many other) empirical, and best found out by observation of real and material events. So that I may say of spiritual learning, as Quintilian said of some of Plato's books: "Nam Plato, cùm in aliis quibusdam, tum præcipuè in Timæo, ne intelligi quidem, nisi ab iis qui hanc quoque partem disciplinæ [musicæ] diligenter perceperint, potest." The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom; and by them too, in several degrees, and to various purposes: but to evil persons the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boor, and music to a camel.

44. But I consider, that the wisest persons, and those who know how to value and entertain the more noble faculties of their soul, and their precious hours, take more pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits, who preserved natural reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkness, (such as are Homer, Euripides, Orpheus, Pindar, and Anacreon, Æschylus and Menander, and all the Greek poets; Plutarch and Polybius, Xenophon, and all those other excellent persons of both faculties, (whose choicest dictates are collected by Stobæus,) Plato and his scholars, Aristotle, and after him Porphyry, and all his other disciples, Pythagoras and his, especially Hierocles; all the old academics and stoics within the Roman schools:) more pleasure, I say, in reading these, than the triflings of many of the later schoolmen, who promoted a petty interest of a family, or an unlearned opinion, with great earnestness; but added nothing to Christianity but trouble, scruple, and vexation. And from hence I hope, that they may the rather be invited to love and consider the rare documents of Christianity, which certainly is the great treasure-house of those excellent, moral, and perfective discourses, which,

with much pains and greater pleasure, we find respersed and thinly scattered in all the Greek and Roman poets, historians, and philosophers.

But because I have observed, that there are some principles entertained into the persuasions of men, which are the seeds of evil life, such as are—the doctrine of late repentance, the mistakes of the definition of the sins of infirmity, the evil understanding the consequents and nature of original sin, the sufficiency of contrition in order to pardon, the efficacy of the rites of Christianity without the necessity of moral adherencies, the nature of faith, and many other; I was diligent to remark such doctrines, and to pare off the mistakes so far, that they hinder not piety, and yet, as near as I could, without engaging in any question, in which the very life of Christianity is not concerned.

> Hæc sum profatus——haud ambagibus
> Implicita, sed quæ, regulis æqui et boni
> Suffulta, rudibus pariter et doctis patent[i].

My great purpose, is to advance the necessity, and to declare the manner and parts, of a good life[k]; and to invite some persons to the consideration of all the parts of it, by intermixing something of pleasure with the use; others, by such parts which will better entertain their spirits, than a romance. I have followed the design of Scripture, and have given milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat; and in all I have despised my own reputation, by so striving to make it useful, that I was less careful to make it strict in retired senses, and embossed with unnecessary, but graceful ornaments. I pray God, this may go forth into a blessing to all that shall use it, and reflect blessings upon me all the way, that my spark may grow greater by kindling my brother's taper, and God may be glorified in us both. If the reader shall receive no benefit, yet I intended him one, and I have laboured in order to it; and I shall receive a great recompense for that intention, if he shall please to say this prayer for me,—"That while I have preached to others, I may not become a cast-away."

[i] Polynic. apud Eurip. Phoen. 504. Pors.

[k] Ἡ παροῦσα πραγματία οὐ θεωρίας ἕνεκά ἐστιν, ὥσπερ αἱ ἄλλαι· οὐ γὰρ ἵν' εἰδῶμεν τί ἐστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ, σκοπούμεθα, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γενώμεθα.—*Arist. Ethic.* l. ii. c. 2.

AN EXHORTATION

TO THE IMITATION OF

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

HOWEVER the person of Jesus Christ was depressed with a load of humble accidents, and shadowed with the darknesses of poverty and sad contingencies, so that the Jews, and the contemporary ages of the Gentiles, and the apostles themselves, could not at first discern the brightest essence of divinity; yet as a beauty, artificially covered with a thin cloud of Cyprus, transmits its excellency to the eye, made more greedy and apprehensive by that imperfect and weak restraint; so was the sanctity and holiness of the life of Jesus glorious in its darknesses, and found confessors and admirers even in the midst of those despites, which were done him upon the contrariant designs of malice and contradictory ambition. Thus the wife of Pilate called him, "that just person;" Pilate pronounced him "guiltless;" Judas said he was "innocent;" the Devil himself called him "the Holy One of God." For however it might concern any man's mistaken ends, to mislike the purpose of his preaching and spiritual kingdom, and those doctrines, which were destructive of their complacencies and carnal securities; yet they could not deny but that he was a man of God, of exemplar sanctity, of an angelical chastity, of a life sweet, affable, and complying with human conversation, and as obedient to government as the most humble children of the kingdom. And yet he was Lord of all the world.

2. And certainly very much of this was with a design, that he might shine to all the generations and ages of the world, and become a guiding star, and a pillar of fire to us in our journey. For we, who believe that Jesus was perfect God and perfect man, do also believe, that one minute of his intolerable passion, and every action of his, might have been

satisfactory, and enough for the expiation and reconcilement of ten thousand worlds; and God might, upon a less effusion of blood, and a shorter life of merit, if he had pleased, have accepted human nature to pardon and favour: but, that the holy Jesus hath added so many excellent instances of holiness, and so many degrees of passion, and so many kinds of virtues, is, that he might become an example to us, and reconcile our wills to him, as well as our persons to his heavenly Father.

3. And indeed it will prove but a sad consideration, that one drop of blood might be enough to obtain our pardon, and the treasures of his blood running out till the fountain itself was dry, shall not be enough to procure our conformity to him; that the smallest minute of his expense shall be enough to justify us, and the whole magazine shall not procure our sanctification; that at a smaller expense God might pardon us, and at a greater we will not imitate him: for therefore "Christ hath suffered for us," saith the apostle, "leaving an example to us, that we might follow his steps[a]." The least of our wills cost Christ as much as the greatest of our sins. And therefore he calls himself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" that as he redeems our souls from death to life, by becoming life to our persons; so he is the truth to our understandings, and the way to our will and affections, enlightening that, and leading these in the paths of a happy eternity.

4. When the king of Moab was pressed hard by the sons of Isaac[b], the Israelites and Edomites, he took the king of Edom's eldest son, or, as some think, his own son, the heir of his kingdom, and offered him as a holocaust upon the wall; and the Edomites presently raised the siege at Kir-haraseth, and went to their own country. The same, and much more, was God's design, who took not his enemy's, but his own Son, his only begotten Son, and God himself, and offered him up in sacrifice, to make us leave our perpetual fightings against Heaven; and if we still persist, we are hardened beyond the wildnesses of the Arabs and Edomites, and neither are receptive of the impresses of pity nor humanity, who neither have compassion to the suffering of Jesus, nor compliance with the designs of God, nor con-

[a] 1 Pet. ii. 21. [b] 2 Kings, iii. 27.

formity to the holiness and obedience of our Guide. In a dark night, if an ignis fatuus do but precede us, the glaring of its lesser flames does so amuse our eyes, that we follow it into rivers and precipices, as if the ray of that false light were designed on purpose to be our path to tread in: and therefore not to follow the glories of the Sun of Righteousness, who indeed leads us over rocks and difficult places, but secures us against the danger, and guides us into safety, is both the greatest indecency and unthankfulness in the world.

5. In the great council of eternity, when God set down the laws, and knit fast the eternal bands, of predestination, he made it one of his great purposes to make his Son like us[c], that we also might be like his holy Son; he, by taking our nature; we, by imitating his holiness: "God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son[d]," saith the apostle. For the first in every kind is in nature propounded as the pattern of the rest; and as the sun, the prince of all the bodies of light, and the fire of all warm substances, is the principal, the rule and the copy, which they in their proportions imitate and transcribe; so is the Word incarnate the great example of all the predestinate; for "he is the first-born among many brethren[e]." And therefore it was a precept of the apostle; and by his doctrine we understand its meaning, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ[f]." The similitude declares the duty. As a garment is composed and made of the same fashion with the body, and is applied to each part in its true figure and commensuration; so should we put on Christ, and imitate the whole body of his sanctity, conforming to every integral part, and express him in our lives, that God, seeing our impresses, may know whose image and superscription we bear, and we may be acknowledged for sons, when we have the air and features and resemblances of our elder brother[g].

6. In the practice of this duty we may be helped by certain considerations, which are like the proportion of so

[c] Διὰ θεομιμησίαν εἰς θεοπτίαν ἀξιώτερος.—*S. Dionys.*

[d] Rom. viii. 29. [e] Ibid. [f] Rom. xiii. 14.

[g] Ἡ δὲ σύμφυτος τῷ νόμῳ τιμὴ, ἥτις οὐσίας ἐστὶ τῶν τιμωμένων γνῶσις, καὶ ἡ πρὸς αὐτὴν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοίωσις· ἕ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, καὶ μιμεῖται ὅσον οἷόν τε· ὡς γὰρ φασιν οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι, Τιμήσεις τὸν θεὸν ἄριστα, ἐὰν τῷ θεῷ τὸν διάνοιαν ὁμοιώσῃς.—*Hierocles.*

many rewards. For this, according to the nature of all holy exercises, stays not for pay, till its work be quite finished; but, like music in churches, is pleasure, and piety, and salary besides. So is every work of grace; full of pleasure in the execution, and is abundantly rewarded, besides the stipend of a glorious eternity.

7. First: I consider that nothing is more honourable than to be like God; and the heathens, worshippers of false deities, grew vicious upon that stock[h]; and we who have fondnesses of imitation, counting a deformity full of honour, if by it we may be like our prince[1], (for pleasures were in their height in Capreæ, because Tiberius there wallowed in them, and a wry neck in Nero's court was the mode of gallantry,) might do well to make our imitations prudent and glorious; and, by propounding excellent examples, heighten our faculties to the capacities of an evenness with the best of precedents. He that strives to imitate another, admires him, and confesses his own imperfections; and therefore, that our admirations be not flattering, nor our confessions fantastic and impertinent, it were but reasonable to admire Him, from whom really all perfections do derive, and before whose glories all our imperfections must confess their shame, and needs of reformation. God, by a voice from heaven, and by sixteen generations of miracles and grace, hath attested the holy Jesus to be the fountain of sanctity, and the "wonderful Counsellor," and "the Captain of our sufferings," and the Guide of our manners, by being his beloved Son, in whom he took pleasure and complacency to the height of satisfaction: and if any thing in the world be motive of our affections, or satisfactory to our understandings, what is there in heaven or

[h] Adulterio delectatur quis? Jovem respicit, et indè cupiditatis suæ fomenta conquirit: probat, imitatur, et laudat, quòd Deus suus in cycno fallit, in tauro rapit, ludit in Satyro. Cœnum de Cœlo facitis, et errantes animos per abrupta præcipitia crudeli calamitate ducitis, cùm hominibus peccare volentibus facinorum viam deorum monstratis exemplis.—*Julius Firmic. de Error. prof. Relig.*

[1] Facere rectè cives suos princeps optimus faciendo docet: cùmque sit imperio magnus, exemplo magis est.—*Vellei. Paterc.* ii. 126. 5. Krause.

——— ναυθετητέος δέ μοι
Φοῖβος, τί πάσχει παρθένου βίᾳ γαμῶν,
Προδίδωσι παῖδας ἐκτεκνούμενος λάθρα
Θνήσκοντας, ἀμίλει μὴ σύ γ' ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς,
Ἀρκτὰς δίωκε. *Eurip. Ion.* 436.

earth we can desire or imagine beyond a likeness to God, and participation of the Divine nature and perfections? And therefore, as, when the sun arises, every man goes to his work, and warms himself with his heat, and is refreshed with his influences, and measures his labour with his course; so should we frame all the actions of our life by His light, who hath shined by an excellent righteousness, that we no more walk in darkness, or sleep in lethargies, or run a gazing after the lesser and imperfect beauties of the night. It is the weakness of the organ, that makes us hold our hand between the sun and us, and yet stand staring upon a meteor or an inflamed jelly. And our judgments are as mistaken, and our appetites are as sottish, if we propound to ourselves, in the courses and designs of perfections, any copy but of him, or something like him, who is the most perfect. And lest we think his glories too great to behold,

8. Secondly, I consider, that the imitation of the life of Jesus is a duty of that excellency and perfection, that we are helped in it, not only by the assistance of a good and a great example, which possibly might be too great, and scare our endeavours and attempts; but also by its easiness, compliance, and proportion to us[k]. For Jesus, in his whole life, conversed with men with a modest virtue, which, like a well-kindled fire fitted with just materials, casts a constant heat; not like an inflamed heap of stubble, glaring with great emissions, and suddenly stooping into the thickness of smoke. His piety was even, constant, unblamable, complying with civil society, without affrightment of precedent, or prodigious instances of actions greater than the imitation of men. For if we observe our blessed Saviour in the whole story of his life, although he was without sin, yet the instances of his piety were the actions of a very holy, but of an ordinary life; and we may observe this difference in the story of Jesus from ecclesiastical writings of certain beatified persons, whose life is told rather to amaze us, and to create scruples, than to lead us in the evenness and serenity of a holy conscience. Such are the prodigious penances of Simeon Stylites, the abstinence of the religious retired into the

[k] Admonetur omnis ætas fieri posse, quod aliquando factum est. Exempla fiunt, quæ jam esse facinora destiterunt.—*S. Cyprian.*

mountain Nitria, but especially the stories of later saints, in the midst of a declining piety and aged Christendom, where persons are represented holy by way of idea and fancy, if not to promote the interests of a family and institution. But our blessed Saviour, though his eternal union and adherences of love and obedience to his heavenly Father were next to infinite, yet in his external actions, in which only, with the correspondence of the Spirit in those actions, he propounds himself imitable, he did so converse with men, that men, after that example, might for ever converse with him. We find that some saints have had excrescencies and eruptions of holiness in the instances of uncommanded duties, which in the same particulars we find not in the story of the life of Jesus. John Baptist was a greater mortifier than his Lord was; and some princes have given more money than all Christ's family did, whilst he was alive: but the difference, which is observable, is, that although some men did some acts of counsel in order to attain that perfection, which in Jesus was essential and unalterable, and was not acquired by degrees, and means of danger and difficulty; yet no man ever did his whole duty, save only the holy Jesus. The best of men did sometimes actions not precisely and strictly requisite, and such as were besides the precept; but yet, in the greatest flames of their shining piety, they prevaricated something of the commandment. They that have done the most things beyond, have also done some things short of their duty; but Jesus, who intended himself the example of piety, did in manners as in the rule of faith, which, because it was propounded to all men, was fitted to every understanding; it was true, necessary, short, easy, and intelligible. So was his rule and his copy fitted, not only with excellencies worthy, but with compliances possible to be imitated; of glories so great, that the most early and constant industry must confess its own imperfections; and yet so sweet and humane, that the greatest infirmity, if pious, shall find comfort and encouragement. Thus God gave his children manna from heaven; and though it was excellent, like the food of angels, yet it conformed to every palate, according to that appetite, which their several fancies and constitutions did produce.

9. But now, when the example of Jesus is so excellent,

that it allures and tempts with its facility and sweetness, and that we are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells of ecstacies in prayer[1], and abstractions of senses, and immaterial transportations, and fastings to the exinanition of spirits, and disabling all animal operations; but a life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion; such a life, without which human society cannot be conserved, and by which, as our irregularities are made regular, so our weaknesses are not upbraided, nor our miseries made a mockery. We find so much reason to address ourselves to a heavenly imitation of so blessed a pattern, that the reasonableness of the thing will be a great argument to chide every degree and minute of neglect. It was a strange and a confident encouragement, which Phocion used to a timorous Greek, who was condemned to die with him:—"Is it not enough to thee, that thou must die with Phocion?" I am sure, he that is most incurious of the issues of his life, is yet willing enough to reign with Jesus, when he looks upon the glories represented without the duty; but it is a very great stupidity and unreasonableness, not to live with him in the imitation of so holy and so prompt a piety. It is glorious to do what he did, and a shame to decline his sufferings, when there was a God to hallow and sanctify the actions, and a man clothed with infirmity to undergo the sharpness of the passion; so that the glory of the person added excellency to the first, and the tenderness of the person excused not from suffering the latter.

10. Thirdly: Every action of the life of Jesus, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that, by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us, and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation, by way of influence and impetration. For, as in the acquisition of habits, the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of itself; so does every exercise of the life of Christ kindle its own fires, inspires breath into itself, and makes an univocal production of itself in a differing subject. And Jesus becomes the fountain of spiritual life to us, as the prophet

[1] Ὡς ἰυγχόμενος τοῖς θεοῖς μετεωρίζῃ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πολὺν ἢ δέκα πήχεις ἐπιέζεσθαι, dixit Eunapius de Iamblicho.

Elisha to the dead child; when he stretched his hands upon the child's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him, the spirit returned again into the child, at the prayer of Elisha; so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest Jesus, the Spirit of God returns into us, not only by the efficacy of the imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of Jesus. It is reported in the Bohemian story[m], that St. Wenceslaus, their king, one winter night going to his devotions, in a remote church, barefooted in the snow and sharpness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant Podavivus, who waited upon his master's piety, and endeavoured to imitate his affections, began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold, till the king commanded him to follow him, and set his feet in the same footsteps, which his feet should mark for him: the servant did so, and either fancied a cure, or found one; for he followed his prince, helped forward with shame and zeal to his imitation, and by the forming footsteps for him in the snow. In the same manner does the blessed Jesus; for, since our way is troublesome, obscure, full of objection and danger, apt to be mistaken and to affright our industry, he commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood, and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath trodden down much of the difficulty, and made the way easier, and fit for our feet. For he knows our infirmities, and himself hath felt their experience in all things but in the neighbourhoods of sin; and therefore he hath proportioned a way and a path to our strengths and capacities, and, like Jacob, hath marched softly and in evenness with the children and the cattle, to entertain us by the comforts of his company, and the influences of a perpetual guide.

11. Fourthly: But we must know, that not every thing which Christ did, is imitable by us; neither did he, in the work of our redemption, in all things imitate his heavenly Father. For there are some things which are issues of an absolute power, some are expresses of supreme dominion, some are actions of a judge. And therefore Jesus prayed for his enemies, and wept over Jerusalem, when at the same

[m] Histor. Bohem. l. iv.

instant his eternal Father laughed them to scorn; for he knew that their day was coming, and himself had decreed their ruin. But it became the holy Jesus to imitate his Father's mercies; for himself was the great instrument of the eternal compassion, and was the instance of mercy; and therefore, in the operation of his Father's design, every action of his was univocal, and he showed the power of his divinity in nothing but in miracles of mercy, and illustrations of faith, by creating arguments of credibility. In the same proportion we follow Jesus, as himself followed his Father: for what he abated by the order to his intendment and design, we abate by the proportions of our nature; for some excellent acts of his were demonstrations of divinity, and an excellent grace poured forth upon him without measure was their instrument; to which proportions if we should extend our infirmities, we should crack our sinews, and dissolve the silver cords, before we could entertain the instances, and support the burden. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights; but the manner of our fastings hath been in all ages limited to the term of an artificial day; and in the primitive observations and the Jewish rites, men did eat their meal, as soon as the stars shone in the firmament. We never read that Jesus laughed, and but once, that he rejoiced in spirit; but the declensions of our natures cannot bear the weight of a perpetual grave deportment, without the intervals of refreshment and free alacrity. Our ever blessed Saviour suffered the devotion of Mary Magdalene to transport her to an expensive expression of her religion, and twice to anoint his feet with costly nard: and yet if persons, whose conditions were of no greater lustre or resplendency of fortune, than was conspicuous in his family and retinue, should suffer the same profusion upon the dressing and perfuming their bodies, possibly it might be truly said, "It might better be sold, and distributed to the poor." This Jesus received, as he was the Christ and anointed of the Lord; and by this he suffered himself to be designed to burial, and he received the oblation as eucharistical for the ejection of seven devils; for "therefore she loved much."

12. The instances are not many. For however Jesus had some extraordinary transvolations, and acts of emigration beyond the lines of his even and ordinary conversation,

yet it was but seldom; for his being exemplary was of so great consideration, that he chose to have fewer instances of wonder, that he might transmit the more of an imitable virtue. And therefore we may establish this for a rule and limit of our imitations; because Christ, our Lawgiver, hath described all his father's will in sanctions and signature of laws; whatsoever he commanded, and whatsoever he did, of precise morality, or in pursuance of the laws of nature, in that we are to trace his footsteps: and in these his laws and his practice differ but as a map and a guide, a law and a judge, a rule and a precedent. But in the special instances of action, we are to abate the circumstances, and to separate the obedience from the effect: whatsoever was moral in a ceremonial performance, that is highly imitable; and the obedience of sacrificing, and the subordination to laws actually in being, even now they are abrogated, teach us our duty, in a differing subject, upon the like reason. Jesus's going up to Jerusalem to the feasts, and his observation of the sabbaths, teach us our duty in celebration of festivals constituted by a competent and just authority. For that which gave excellency to the observation of Mosaical rites, was an evangelical duty; and the piety of obedience did not only consecrate the observations of Levi, but taught us our duty in the constitutions of Christianity.

13. Fifthly; As the holy Jesus did some things, which we are not to imitate; so we also are to do some things, which we cannot learn from his example. For there are some of our duties, which presuppose a state of sin, and some suppose a violent temptation and promptness to it; and the duties of prevention, and the instruments of restitution, are proper to us, but conveyed only by precept, and not by precedent. Such are all the parts and actions of repentance, the duties of mortification and self-denial. For whatsoever the holy Jesus did, in the matter of austerity, looked directly upon the work of our redemption, and looked back only on us by a reflex act, as Christ did on Peter, when he looked him into repentance. Some states of life also there are, which Jesus never led; such are those of temporal governors, kings and judges, merchants, lawyers, and the state of marriage: in the course of which lives many cases do occur, which need a precedent and the vivacity of

an excellent example, especially since all the rules, which they have, have not prevented the subtilty of the many inventions, which men have found out, nor made provision for all contingencies. Such persons, in all their special needs, are to govern their actions by the rules of proportion, by analogy to the holiness of the person of Jesus, and the sanctity of his institution; considering what might become a person professing the discipline of so holy a Master, and what he would have done in the like case; taking our heights by the excellence of his innocency and charity. Only remember this, that, in such cases, we must always judge on the strictest side of piety and charity, if it be a matter concerning the interest of a second person; and that, in all things, we do those actions which are farthest removed from scandal, and such as towards ourselves are severe; towards others, full of gentleness and sweetness: for so would the righteous and merciful Jesus have done. These are the best analogies and proportions. And in such cases, when the wells are dry, let us take water from a cistern, and propound to ourselves some exemplar saint, the necessities of whose life have determined his piety to the like occurrences.

14. But now, from these particulars we shall best account to what the duty of the imitation of Jesus does amount: for it signifies, that we "should walk as he walked," tread in his steps, with our hand upon the guide, and our eye upon his rule; that we should do glory to him, as he did to his Father; and that whatsoever we do, we should be careful that it do him honour, and no reproach to his institution; and then account these to be the integral parts of our duty, which are imitation of his actions, or his spirit, of his rule, or of his life; there being no better imitation of him, than in such actions as do him pleasure, however he hath expressed or imitated the precedent.

15. He that gives alms to the poor, takes Jesus by the hand; he that patiently endures injuries and affronts, helps him to bear his cross; he that comforts his brother in affliction, gives an amiable kiss of peace to Jesus; he that bathes his own and his neighbour's sins in tears of penance and compassion, washes his Master's feet: we lead Jesus into the recesses of our heart by holy meditations; and we

enter into his heart, when we express him in our actions: for so the apostle says, "He that is in Christ, walks as he also walked[n]." But thus the actions of our life relate to him by way of worship and religion; but the use is admirable and effectual, when our actions refer to him as to our copy, and we transcribe the original to the life. He that considers, with what affections and lancinations of spirit, with what effusions of love Jesus prayed, what fervours and assiduity, what innocency of wish, what modesty of posture, what subordination to his Father, and conformity to the Divine pleasure, were in all his devotions, is taught and excited to holy and religious prayer; the rare sweetness of his deportment in all temptations and violences of his passion, his charity to his enemies, his sharp reprehensions to the scribes and Pharisees, his ingenuity toward all men, are living and effectual sermons to teach us patience and humility, and zeal, and candid simplicity, and justice in all our actions. I add no more instances, because all the following discourses will be prosecutions of this intendment. And the life of Jesus is not described to be like a picture in a chamber of pleasure, only for beauty, and entertainment of the eye; but like the Egyptian hieroglyphics, whose every feature is a precept, and the images converse with men by sense, and signification of excellent discourses.

16. It was not without great reason advised[o], that every man should propound the example of a wise and virtuous personage, as Cato, or Socrates, or Brutus; and, by a fiction of imagination, to suppose him present as a witness, and really to take his life as the direction of all our actions. The best and most excellent of the old lawgivers and philosophers among the Greeks had an allay of viciousness, and could not be exemplary all over: some were noted for flatterers, as Plato and Aristippus; some for incontinency, as Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Theognis, Plato and Aristippus again; and Socrates, whom their oracle affirmed to be the wisest and most perfect man, yet was by Porphyry noted for extreme intemperance of anger, both in words and actions: and those Romans who were offered to them for examples, although they were great in reputation, yet they had also great vices; Brutus dipped his hand in the

[n] 1 John, ii. 6. [o] Seneca, Ep. 11.

blood of Cæsar, his prince, and his father by love, endearments, and adoption; and Cato was but a wise man all day, at night he was used to drink too liberally; and both he and Socrates did give their wives unto their friends[p]; the philosopher and the censor were procurers of their wives' unchastity: and yet these were the best among the Gentiles. But how happy and richly furnished are Christians with precedents of saints, whose faith and revelations have been productive of more spiritual graces, and greater degrees of moral perfections! And this I call the privilege of a very great assistance, that I might advance the reputation and account of the life of the glorious Jesu, which is not abated by the imperfections of human nature, as they were, but receives great heightenings and perfection from the Divinity of his person, of which they were never capable.

17. Let us therefore press after Jesus, as Elisha did after his master, with an inseparable prosecution, even whithersoever he goes; that, according to the reasonableness and proportion expressed in St. Paul's advice, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we may also bear the image of the heavenly[q]." For, "In vain are we called Christians, if we live not according to the example and discipline of Christ, the Father of the institution[r]." When St. Laurence was in the midst of the torments of the gridiron, he made this to be the matter of his joy and eucharist, that he was admitted to the gates through which Jesus had entered; and therefore thrice happy are they, who walk in his courts all their days. And it is yet a nearer union and vicinity, to imprint his life in our souls, and express it in our exterior converse; and this is done

[p] Athenagoras, lib. iii. et xiii. et Theognis de sc. Idem testantur Laertius et Lactantius. Hoc notat S. Cyrillus, l. vi. contra Julian.

Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.—*Horat.* 3. 21. 11.

Majorum et sapientissimorum disciplina, Græci Socratis et Romani Catonis, qui uxores suas amicis communicaverunt, quas in matrimonium duxerant liberorum causâ, et alibi creandorum, nescio quidem an invitas: quid nam de castitate curarent, quam mariti tam facilè donaverant? O sapientiæ Atticæ, O Romanæ gravitatis exemplum! Leno est philosophus et censor.—*Tertul. Apolog.* c. 39.

[q] 1 Cor. xv. 49.

[r] Dictum Malachiæ Abbat. apud S. Bernardum, in Vitâ S. Mal.

by him only, who (as St. Prosper[s] describes the duty) despises all those gilded vanities which he despised, that fears none of those sadnesses which he suffered, that practises or also teaches those doctrines which he taught, and hopes for the accomplishment of all his promises. And this is truest religion, and the most solemn adoration[t].

THE PRAYER.

O eternal, holy, and most glorious Jesu, who hast united two natures of distance infinite, descending to the lownesses of human nature, that thou mightest exalt human nature to a participation of the Divinity; we, thy people, that sat in darkness and in the shadows of death, have seen great light, to entertain our understandings and enlighten our souls with its excellent influences; for the excellency of thy sanctity, shining gloriously in every part of thy life, is like thy angel, the pillar of fire, which called thy children from the darknesses of Egypt. Lord, open mine eyes, and give me power to behold thy righteous glories; and let my soul be so entertained with affections and holy ardours, that I may never look back upon the flames of Sodom, but may follow thy light, which recreates and enlightens, and guides us to the mountains of safety, and sanctuaries of holiness. Holy Jesu, since thy image is imprinted on our nature by creation, let me also express thy image by all the parts of a holy life, conforming my will and affections to thy holy precepts; submitting my understanding to thy dictates and lessons of perfection; imitating thy sweetnesses and excellencies of society, thy devotion in prayer, thy conformity to God, thy zeal tempered with meekness, thy patience heightened with charity; that heart, and hands, and eyes, and all my faculties, may grow up with the increase of God, till I come to the full measure of the stature of Christ, even to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus; that at last in thy light I may see light, and reap the fruits of glory from the seeds of sanctity, in the imitation of thy holy life, O blessed and holy Saviour Jesus! Amen.

[s] Lib. ii. de Vita Contemplat. c. 21.

[t] Religiosissimus Cultus imitari.—*Lactant.*

THE LIFE

OF

OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

PART I.

BEGINNING AT THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, UNTIL HIS BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION INCLUSIVELY.

SECTION I.

The History of the Conception of Jesus.

1. WHEN the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons, the departure of the "sceptre from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet;" when the number of Daniel's years was accomplished, and the Egyptian and Syrian kingdoms had their period; God, having great compassion towards mankind, remembering his promises, and our great necessities, sent his Son into the world, to take upon him our nature, and all that guilt of sin, which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment, which was consequent to our sin: which came to pass after this manner.

2. In the days of Herod the king, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a holy maid, called Mary, espoused to Joseph, and found her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour, that ever was done to the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her person young, her years florid and springing, her body chaste, her mind humble, and a rare repository of divine graces. She was full of grace and excellencies; and God poured upon her a full measure of honour, in making her the mother of the Messias: for the "angel came to her, and said, Hail, thou that art

highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

3. We cannot but imagine the great mixture of innocent disturbances and holy passions, that, in the first address of the angel, did rather discompose her settledness, and interrupt the silence of her spirits, than dispossess her dominion, which she ever kept over those subjects, which never had been taught to rebel beyond the mere possibilities of natural imperfection. But if the angel appeared in the shape of a man, it was an unusual arrest to the blessed Virgin, who was accustomed to retirements and solitariness, and had not known an experience of admitting a comely person, but a stranger, to her closet and privacies. But if the heavenly messenger did retain a diviner form, more symbolical to angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious message, although her daily employment was a conversation with angels, who, in their daily ministering to the saints, did behold her chaste conversation, coupled with fear, yet they used not any affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were seen only by spiritual discernings. However, so it happened, that " when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind, what manner of salutation this should be."

4. But the angel, who came with designs of honour and comfort to her, not willing that the inequality and glory of the messenger should, like too glorious a light to a weaker eye, rather confound the faculty than enlighten the organ, did, before her thoughts could find a tongue, invite her to a more familiar confidence than possibly a tender virgin (though of the greatest serenity and composure) could have put on, in the presence of such a beauty and such a holiness. And " the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus."

5. The holy Virgin knew herself a person very unlikely to be a mother: for, although the desires of becoming a mother to the Messias were great in every of the daughters of Jacob, and about that time the expectation of his revelation was high and pregnant, and therefore she was espoused to an honest and a just person of her kindred and family,

and so might not despair to become a mother; yet she was a person of a rare sanctity, and so mortified a spirit, that for all this desponsation of her, according to the desire of her parents, and the custom of the nation, she had not set one step toward the consummation of her marriage, so much as in thought; and possibly had set herself back from it by a vow of chastity and holy celibate: for "Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

6. But the angel, who was a person of that nature, which knows no conjunctions but those of love and duty, knew that the piety of her soul, and the religion of her chaste purposes, was a great imitator of angelical purity, and therefore perceived where the philosophy of her question did consist; and, being taught of God, declared that the manner should be as miraculous, as the message itself was glorious. For the angel told her, that this should not be done by any way, which our sin and the shame of Adam had unhallowed, by turning nature into a blush, and forcing her to a retirement from a public attesting the means of her own preservation; but the whole matter was from God, and so should the manner be: for "the angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

7. When the blessed Virgin was so ascertained, that she should be a mother[a] and a maid, and that two glories, like the two luminaries of Heaven, should meet in her, that she might in such a way become the mother of her Lord, that she might with better advantages be his servant; then all her hopes and all her desires received such satisfaction, and filled all the corners of her heart so much, as indeed it was fain to make room for its reception. But she to whom the greatest things of religion, and the transportations of devotion, were made familiar, by the assiduity and piety of her daily practices, however she was full of joy, yet she was carried like a full vessel, without the violent tossings of

[a] ——— quæ ventre beato
Gaudia matris habens cum virginitatis honore,
Nec primam similem visa es, nec habere sequentem;
Sola sine exemplo placuisti fœmina Christo. — *Sedul.*

a tempestuous passion, or the wrecks of a stormy imagination: and, as the power of the Holy Ghost did descend upon her like rain into a fleece of wool, without any obstreperous noises or violences to nature, but only the extraordinariness of an exaltation; so her spirit received it with the gentleness and tranquillity fitted for the entertainment of the spirit of love, and a quietness symbolical to the holy guest of her spotless womb, the Lamb of God; for she meekly replied, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according unto thy word. And the angel departed from her," having done his message. And at the same time the Holy Spirit of God did make her to conceive in her womb the immaculate Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

Ad SECTION I.

Considerations upon the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, and the Conception of the Holy Jesus.

1. THAT which shines brightest, presents itself first to the eye; and the devout soul, in the chain of excellent and precious things, which are represented in the counsel, design, and first beginnings of the work of our redemption, hath not leisure to attend the twinkling of the lesser stars, till it hath stood and admired the glory and eminencies of the Divine love, manifested in the incarnation of the Word eternal. God had no necessity, in order to the conservation or the heightening his own felicity, but out of mere and perfect charity, and the bowels of compassion, sent[a] into the world his only Son, for remedy to human miseries, to ennoble our nature by an union with Divinity, to sanctify it with his justice, to enrich it with his grace, to instruct it with his doctrine, to fortify it with his example, to rescue it from servitude, to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God, and at last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection.

2. God, who, in the infinite treasures of his wisdom and

[a] Cùm inter nos et Deum discordiam peccando fecimus, tamen ad nos Deus legatum suum prior misit, ut nos ipsi, qui peccavimus, ad pacem Dei rogati veniamus. — *St. Greg.*

providence, could have found out many other ways for our redemption, than the incarnation of his eternal Son, was pleased to choose this, not only that the remedy by man might have proportion to the causes of our ruin, whose introduction and intromission was by the prevarication of man; but also, that we might with freer dispensation receive the influences of a Saviour, with whom we communicate in nature. Although Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were of greater name and current, yet they were not so salutary as the waters of Jordan, to cure Naaman's leprosy. And if God had made the remedy of human nature to have come all the way clothed in prodigy, and every instant of its execution had been as terrible, affrighting, and as full of majesty, as the apparitions upon Mount Sinai; yet it had not been so useful and complying to human necessities, as was the descent of God to the susception of human nature, whereby (as in all medicaments) the cure is best wrought by those instruments, which have the fewest dissonances to our temper, and are the nearest to our constitution. For thus the Saviour of the world became human, alluring, full of invitation and the sweetnesses of love, exemplary, humble, and medicinal.

3. And, if we consider the reasonableness of the thing, what can be given more excellent for the redemption of man, than the blood of the Son of God? And what can more ennoble our nature, than that by the means of his holy humanity it was taken up into the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity[b]? What better advocate could we have for us, than he that is appointed to be our Judge? And what greater hopes of reconciliation can be imagined, than that God, in whose power it is to give an absolute pardon, hath taken a new nature, entertained an office, and undergone a life of poverty, with a purpose to procure our pardon? For now, though, as the righteous Judge, he will judge the nations righteously; yet, by the susception of our nature, and its appendant crimes, he is become a party; and, having obliged himself as man, as he is God he will satisfy, by putting the value of an infinite merit to the actions and sufferings of his

[b] Quod sperare nullus audebat: quod si fortè in mentem alicujus incidisset, poterat æstimare se in blasphemiam incurrisse.—*St. Primasius.*

humanity. And if he had not been God, he could not have given us remedy; if he had not been man, we should have wanted the excellency of example.

4. And till now, human nature was less than that of angels; but, by the incarnation of the Word, was to be exalted above the cherubims: yet the archangel Gabriel[c], being dispatched in embassy to represent the joy and exaltation of his inferior, instantly trims his wings with love and obedience, and hastens with this narrative to the holy Virgin. And, if we should reduce our prayers to action, and do God's will on earth, as the angels in heaven do it, we should promptly execute every part of the Divine will, though it were to be instrumental to the exaltation of a brother above ourselves; knowing no end but conformity to the Divine will, and making simplicity of intention to be the fringes and exterior borders of our garments.

5. When the eternal God meant to stoop so low as to be fixed to our centre, he chose for his mother a holy person and a maid, but yet affianced to a just man, that he might not only be secure in the innocency, but also provided for in the reputation of his holy mother: teaching us, that we must not only satisfy ourselves in the purity of our purposes and hearty innocence, but that we must provide also things honest in the sight of all men, being free from the suspicion and semblances of evil; so making provision for private innocence and public honesty: it being necessary, in order to charity, and edification of our brethren, that we hold forth no impure flames or smoking firebrands, but pure and trimmed lamps, in the eyes of all the world.

6. And yet her marriage was more mysterious; for as, besides the miracle, it was an eternal honour and advancement to the glory of virginity, that he chose a virgin for his mother, so it was in that manner attempered, that the Virgin was betrothed, lest honourable marriage might be disreputed, and seem inglorious, by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour. Divers of the old doctors, from the authority of Ignatius[d], add another reason, saying, that the blessed Jesus was therefore born of a woman

[c] Ἀγαθῇ δ' οὐδὲις περὶ οὐδένος οὐδένοτε ἐγγίνεται φθόνος.— *Hier. in Pythag.*

[d] Origen. Homil. vi. in Levit. Hier. Comment. in 1 Matth. St. Basilius, et alii.

betrothed, and under the pretence of marriage, that the devil, who knew the Messias was to be born of a virgin, might not expect him there, but so be ignorant of the person, till God had served many ends of providence upon him.

7. The angel, in his address, needed not to go in inquisition after a wandering fire, but knew she was a star fixed in her own orb: he found her at home; and, lest that also might be too large a circuit, she was yet confined to a more intimate retirement; she was in her oratory, private and devout. There are some curiosities so bold and determinate, as to tell the very matter of her prayer[e], and that she was praying for the salvation of all the world, and the revelation of the Messias, desiring she might be so happy as to kiss the feet of her, who should have the glory to be his mother. We have no security of the particular; but there is no piety so diffident as to require a sign to create a belief, that her employment at the instant was holy and religious; but in that disposition she received a grace, which the greatest queens would have purchased with the quitting of their diadems, and hath consigned an excellent document to all women, that they accustom themselves often to those retirements, where none but God and his angels can have admittance. For the holy Jesus can come to them too, and dwell with them, hallowing their souls, and consigning their bodies to a participation of all his glories. But recollecting of all our scattered thoughts and exterior extravagances, and a receding from the inconveniences of a too free conversation, is the best circumstance to dispose us to a heavenly visitation.

8. The holy Virgin, when she saw an angel, and heard a testimony from heaven of her grace and piety, was troubled within herself at the salutation, and the manner of it: for she had learned, that the affluence of Divine comforts and prosperous successes should not exempt us from fear, but make it the more prudent and wary, lest it entangle us in a vanity of spirit; God having ordered that our spirits should be affected with dispositions in some degrees contrary to exterior events, that we be fearful in the affluence of prosper-

[e] St. Bernard.

ous things, and joyful in adversity; as knowing that this may produce benefit and advantage; and the changes that are consequent to the other, are sometimes full of mischiefs, but always of danger. But her silence and fear were her guardians; that, to prevent excrescences of joy; this, of vainer complacency.

9. And it is not altogether inconsiderable to observe, that the holy Virgin came to a great perfection and state of piety by a few, and those modest and even, exercises and external actions. St. Paul travelled over the world, preached to the Gentiles, disputed against the Jews, confounded heretics, writ excellently learned letters, suffered dangers, injuries, affronts, and persecutions to the height of wonder, and by these violences of life, action and patience, obtained the crown of an excellent religion and devotion. But the holy Virgin, although she was engaged sometimes in an active life, and in the exercise of an ordinary and small economy and government, or ministries of a family, yet she arrived to her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety, the internal actions of love, devotion, and contemplation; and instructs us, that not only those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion, or a pompous charity, or miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectual preachings, or exterior demonstrations of corporal mercy, shall have the greatest crowns, and the addition of degrees and accidental rewards; but the silent affections, the splendours of an internal devotion, the unions of love, humility, and obedience, the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God, the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meekness, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a veil and silence, make great ascents to God, and as sure progress to favour and a crown, as the more ostentous and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power or opportunities for religious perfections: a devout woman in her closet, praying with much zeal and affections for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a "shining like the stars in glory," as he who, by excellent discourses, puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my sermon, and made the ground fruit-

ful, and the seed spring up to life eternal. Many times God is present in the still voice and private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the loud and impetuous winds, and the shining fires of more laborious and expensive actions, are profitable to others only, like a tree of balsam, distilling precious liquor for others, not for its own use.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and almighty God, who didst send thy holy angel in embassy to the blessed Virgin mother of our Lord, to manifest the actuating thine eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind by the incarnation of thine eternal Son; put me, by the assistances of thy Divine grace, into such holy dispositions, that I may never impede the event and effect of those mercies, which, in the counsels of thy predestination, thou didst design for me. Give me a promptness to obey thee to the degree and semblance of angelical alacrity; give me holy purity and piety, prudence and modesty, like those excellencies which thou didst create in the ever-blessed Virgin, the mother of God: grant that my employment be always holy, unmixed with worldly affections, and, as much as my condition of life will bear, retired from secular interests and disturbances; that I may converse with angels, entertain the holy Jesus, conceive him in my soul, nourish him with the expresses of most innocent and holy affections, and bring him forth and publish him in a life of piety and obedience, that he may dwell in me for ever, and I may for ever dwell with him, in the house of eternal pleasures and glories, world without end. Amen.

SECTION II.

The Bearing of Jesus in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Virgin had a faith as prompt and ready, as her body was chaste and her soul pure; yet God, who uses to give full measure, shaken together, and running

over, did, by way of confirmation, and fixing the confidence of her assent, give an instance of his omnipotency in the very particular of an extraordinary conception. For the angel said, " Behold thy cousin Elizabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible." A less argument would have satisfied the necessity of a faith, which had no scruple; and a greater would not have done it in the incredulity of an ungentle and pertinacious spirit. But the holy maid had complacency enough in the message, and holy desires about her, to carry her understanding as far as her affections, even to the fruition of the angel's message; which is such a sublimity of faith, that it is its utmost consummation, and shall be its crown, when our faith is turned into vision, our hopes into actual possessions, and our grace into glory.

2. And she, who was now full of God, bearing God in her virgin womb, and the Holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernatural and miraculous conception, arose with haste and gladness, to communicate that joy, which was designed for all the world; and she found no breast to pour forth the first emanations of her overjoyed heart so fit as her cousin Elizabeth's, who had received testimony from God to have been " righteous, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," who also had a special portion in this great honour: for she was designed to be the mother of the Baptist, who was sent as a forerunner, " to prepare the ways of the Lord, and to make his paths straight. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah."

3. Her haste was in proportion to her joy and desires, but yet went no greater pace than her religion: for as in her journey she came near to Jerusalem, she turned in, that she might visit his temple, whose temple she herself was now; and there, not only to remember the pleasures of religion, which she had felt in continual descents and showers falling on her pious heart, for the space of eleven years' attendance there in her childhood, but also to pay the first fruits of her thanks and joy, and to lay all her glory at his feet, whose humble handmaid she was, in the greatest honour of being

his blessed mother. Having worshipped, she went on her journey, " and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."

4. It is not easy to imagine, what a collision of joys was at this blessed meeting: two mothers of two great princes, the one the greatest that was born of woman, and the other was his Lord, and these made mothers by two miracles, met together with joy and mysteriousness; where the mother of our Lord went to visit the mother of his servant, and the Holy Ghost made the meeting festival, and descended upon Elizabeth, and she prophesied. Never, but in Heaven, was there more joy and ecstacy. The persons, who were women whose fancies and affections were not only hallowed, but made pregnant and big with religion, meeting together to compare and unite their joys, and their eucharist, and then made prophetical and inspired, must needs have discoursed like seraphims and the most ecstasied order of intelligences; for all the faculties of nature were turned into grace, and expressed in their way the excellent solemnity. " For it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."

5. After they had both prophesied, and sung their hymns, and resaluted each other with the religion of saints and the joys of angels, " Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own house." Where when she appeared with her holy burden to her husband Joseph, and that he perceived her to be with child, and knew that he had never unsealed that holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled. For although her deportment had been pious and chaste to a miracle, her carriage reserved, and so grave, that she drave away temptations, and impure visits, and all unclean purposes from the neighbourhood of her holy person; yet when he saw she was with child, and had not yet been taught a lesson higher than the principles of nature, " he was minded to put her away," for he knew she was with child; but yet " privily," because he was a good man, and knew her piety to have been such, that it had almost done violence to his sense, and made him disbelieve what was visible and notorious, and therefore he would do it privately. " But while he thought on these

things, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife."

Ad SECTION II.

Considerations concerning the Circumstances of the Interval between the Conception and Nativity.

1. WHEN the blessed Virgin was ascertained of the manner of her becoming a mother, and that her tremblings were over, upon the security she should preserve her virgin purity as a clean oblation to the honour of God, then she expressed her consent to the angelical message, and instantly she conceived the holy Jesus in her womb, by the supernatural and Divine influence of the Holy Ghost. For she was highly zealous to reconcile her being mother to the Messias, with those purities and holy celibate, which she had designed to keep as advantages to the interests of religion, and his honour, who chose her from all the daughters of Adam, to be instrumental of the restitution of grace and innocence to all her father's family. And we shall receive benefit from so excellent example, if we be not so desirous of a privilege as of a virtue, of honour as of piety: and as we submit to the weight and pressure of sadnesses and infelicities, that God's will may be accomplished; so we must be also ready to renounce an exterior grace or favour, rather than it should not be consistent with exemplar and rare piety.

2. When the Son of God was incarnate in the womb of his Virgin mother, the holy maid arose; and though she was super-exalted by an honour greater than the world yet ever saw, she still dwelt upon the foundation of humility; and to make that virtue more signal and eminent, she arose and went hastily to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who also had conceived a son in her old age: for so we all should be curious and watchful against vanities and transportations, when we are advanced to the gaieties of prosperous accidents, and in

the greatest privileges descend to the lowest, to exercise a greater measure of virtue against the danger of those temptations, which are planted against our heart, to ruin our hopes and glories.

3. But the joys that the Virgin mother had, were such as concerned all the world; and that part of them, which was her peculiar, she would not conceal from persons apt to their entertainment, but go to publish God's mercy toward her to another holy person, that they might join in the praises of God; as knowing, that though it may be convenient to represent our personal necessities in private, yet God's gracious returns, and the blessings he makes to descend on us, are more fit, when there is no personal danger collaterally appendant, to be published in the communion of saints; that the hopes of others may receive increase, that their faith may have confirmation, that their charity and eucharist may grow up to become excellent and great, and the praises of God may be sung aloud, till the sound strike at Heaven, and join with the hallelujahs, which the morning stars in their orbs pay to their great Creator.

4. When the holy Virgin had begun her journey, she made haste over the mountains, that she might not only satisfy the desires of her joy by a speedy gratulation, but lest she should be too long abroad under the dispersion and discomposing of her retirements; and therefore she hastens to an enclosure, to her cousin's house, as knowing that all virtuous women, like tortoises, carry their house on their heads, and their chapel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions. And indeed her very little burden, which she bare, hindered her not but she might make haste enough; and as her spirit was full of cheerfulness and alacrity, so even her body was made airy and vegete: for there was no sin in her burden, to fill it with natural inconveniences; and there is this excellency in all spiritual things, that they do no disadvantage to our persons, nor retard our just temporal interests. And the religion, by which we carry Christ within us, is neither so peevish as to disturb our health, nor so sad as to discompose our just and modest cheerfulness, nor so prodigal as to force us to needs and ignoble trades; but recreates our body by the medicine of holy fastings and temperance, fills us full of

serenities and complacencies, by the sweetnesses of a holy conscience and joys spiritual, promotes our temporal interests, by the gains and increases of the rewards of charity, and by securing God's providence over us, while we are in the pursuit of the heavenly kingdom. And as in these dispositions she climbed the mountains with much facility, so there is nothing in our whole life of difficulty so great, but it may be managed by those assistances we receive from the holiest Jesus, when we carry him about us; as the vallies are exalted, so the mountains are made plain before us.

5. When her cousin Elizabeth saw the mother of her Lord come to visit her, as the Lord himself descended to visit all the world in great humility, she was pleased and transported to the height of wonder and prophecy, and "the babe sprang in her womb," and was sanctified, first doing his homage and adoration to his Lord that was in presence. And we also, although we can do nothing unless the Lord first prevent us with his gracious visitation, yet if he first come unto us, and we accept and entertain him with the expresses and correspondencies of our duty, we shall receive the grace and honour of sanctification. But if St. Elizabeth, who received testimony from God that she "walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," was carried into ecstacy, wondering at the dignation and favour done to her by the mother of her Lord; with what preparations and holy solemnities ought we to entertain his addresses to us by his holy sacrament, by the immissions of his Spirit, by the assistances of his graces, and all other his vouchsafings and descents into our hearts?

6. The blessed Virgin hearing her cousin full of spirit and prophecy, calling her blessed, and praising her faith, and confirming her joy, instantly sang her hymn to God, returning those praises, which she received, to him to whom they did appertain. For so we should worship God with all our praises, being willing upon no other condition to extend one hand to receive our own honour, but that with the other we might transmit it to God; that as God is honoured in all his creatures, so he may be honoured in us too; looking upon the graces, which God hath given us, but as greater instruments and abilities to serve him, being none of ours, but talents which are intrusted into our banks to be improved.

But as a precious pearl is orient and medicinal, because God hath placed those excellencies in it for ends of his own, but itself is dead to all apprehensions of it, and knows no reflections upon its own value, only God is magnified in his work; so is every pious person precious and holy, but mortified to all vainer complacencies in those singularities and eminencies, which God placed there, because he was so pleased, saying, there he would have a temple built, because from thence he would take delight to receive glory and adoration.

7. After all these holy and festival joys, which the two glad mothers feasted themselves withal, a sad cloud did intervene and passed before the face of the blessed Virgin. The just and righteous Joseph, her espoused husband, perceiving her to be with child, "was minded to put her away," as not knowing the divinity of the fountain, which watered the Virgin's sealed and hallowed womb, and made it fruitful; but he purposed to do it "privily," that he might preserve the reputation of his spouse, whose piety he knew was great, and was sorrowful it should now set in a sad night, and be extinct. But it was an exemplar charity, and reads to us a rule for our deportment towards erring and lapsed persons, that we entreat them with meekness and pity and fear; not hastening their shame, nor provoking their spirit, nor making their remedy desperate by using of them rudely, till there be no worse thing for them to fear, if they should be dissolved into all licentiousness. For an open shame is commonly protested unto, when it is remediless, and the person either despairs and sinks under the burden, or else grows impudent[a], and tramples upon it. But the gentleness of a modest and charitable remedy preserves that which is virtue's girdle, fear and blushing; and the beginning of a punishment chides them into the horror of remembrance and guilt, but preserves their meekness and modesty, because they, not feeling the worst of evils, dare not venture upon the worst of sins.

8. But it seems the blessed Virgin, having received this greatest honour, had not made it known to her husband Joseph; and when she went to her cousin Elizabeth, the Virgin was told of it by her cousin, before she spake of it herself, for her cousin had it by revelation and the spirit of

[a] Frontemque à crimine sumit.

prophecy. And it is in some circumstances and from some persons more secure to conceal visions and those heavenly gifts, which create estimations among men, than to publish them, which may possibly minister to vanity; and those exterior graces may do God's work, though no observer note them, but the person for whose sake they are sent: like rain falling in uninhabited vallies, where no eye observes showers; yet the vallies laugh and sing to God in their refreshment without a witness. However, it is better to hear the report of our good things from the mouths of others, than from ourselves: and better yet, if the beauty of the tabernacle be covered with skins, that none of our beauties be seen but by worshippers, that is, when the glory of God and the interests of religion or charity are concerned in their publication. For so it happened to be in the case of the blessed Virgin, as she related to her cousin Elizabeth; and so it happened not to be, as she referred to her husband Joseph.

9. The holy Virgin could not but know, that Joseph would be troubled with sorrow and insecure apprehensions concerning her being with child; but such was her innocence and her confidence in God, that she held her peace, expecting which way God would provide a remedy to the inconvenience: for if we "commit ourselves to God in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator," preserving the tranquillity of our spirits and the evenness of our temper in the assault of infamy and disreputation, God, who loves our innocence, will be its patron, and will assert it from the scandal, if it be expedient for us: if it be not, it is not fit we should desire it. But if the holy Jesus did suffer his mother to fall into misinterpretation and suspect, which could not but be a great affliction to her excellent spirit, rarely tempered as an eye, highly sensible of every ruder touch, we must not think it strange, if we be tried and pressed with a calamity and unhandsome accidents: only remember, that God will find a remedy to the trouble, and will sanctify the affliction, and secure the person, if we be innocent, as was the holy Virgin.

10. But Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purposes, nor of making his thoughts determinate, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted it, because it was an invidious matter, and a rigour. He was, first, to have defamed and accused her publicly, and, being convicted, by

the law she was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way; but he, who was a just man, that is, according to the style of Scripture and other wise writers[b], "a good, a charitable man," found that it was more agreeable to justice to treat an offending person with the easiest sentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the person desperate, and without remedy, and provoked by the suffering of the worst of what she could fear. No obligation to justice does force a man to be cruel, or to use the sharpest sentence[c]. A just man does justice to every man, and to every thing; and then, if he be also wise, he knows there is a debt of mercy and compassion due to the infirmities of a man's nature, and that debt is to be paid: and he that is cruel and ungentle to a sinning person, and does the worst thing to him, dies in his debt, and is unjust. Pity, and forbearance, and long-suffering, and fair interpretation, and excusing our brother, and taking things in the best sense, and passing the gentlest sentence, are as certainly our duty, and owing to every person that does offend, and can repent, as calling men to account can be owing to the law, and are first to be paid; and he that does not so, is an unjust person: which because Joseph was not, he did not call furiously for justice, or pretend that God required it at his hands presently, to undo a suspected person, but waved the killing letter of the law, and secured his own interest and his justice too, by intending to dismiss her privately. But, before the thing was irremediable, God ended his question by a heavenly demonstration, and sent an angel to reveal to him the innocence of his spouse, and the divinity of her son; and that he was an immediate derivative from Heaven, and the heir of all the world. And in all our doubts we shall have a resolution from Heaven, or some of its ministers, if we have recourse thither for a guide, and be not hasty in our discourses, or inconsiderate in our purposes, or rash in judgment. For God loves to give assistances to us, when we most fairly and prudently endeavour, that grace be not put to do all our work, but to facilitate our labour; not creating new faculties, but improving those of nature. If we

[b] 1 John, i. 9. Psalm cxi. 3. Δικαιοσύνη, χρηστότης, ἀγαθότης, φιλανθρωπία. —*Philostr. de Vita Apollon.* l. iii. c. 7.

[c] Non solùm ab ultionis atrocitate, sed etiam ab accusationis severitate, aliena justi persona est.—*Ambros.*

consider warily, God will guide us in the determination; but a hasty person outruns his guide, prevaricates his rule, and very often engages upon error.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesu, Son of the Eternal God, thy glory is far above all heavens, and yet thou didst descend to earth, that thy descent might be the more gracious, by how much thy glories were admirable, and natural, and inseparable: I adore thy holy humanity with humble veneration, and the thankful addresses of religious joy, because thou hast personally united human nature to the eternal Word, carrying it above the seats of the highest cherubim. This great and glorious mystery is the honour and glory of man. It was the expectation of our fathers, who saw the mysteriousness of thy incarnation at great and obscure distances. And blessed be thy name, that thou hast caused me to be born after the fulfilling of thy prophecies, and the consummation and exhibition of so great a love, so great mysteriousness. Holy Jesu, though I admire and adore the immensity of thy love and condescension, who wert pleased to undergo our burdens and infirmities for us; yet I abhor myself, and detest my own impurities, which were so great, and contradictory to the excellency of God, that, to destroy sin, and save us, it became necessary that thou shouldest be sent into the world, to die our death for us, and to give us of thy life.

II.

Dearest Jesu, thou didst not breathe one sigh, nor shed one drop of blood, nor weep one tear, nor suffer one stripe, nor preach one sermon for the salvation of the devils: and what sadness and shame is it then, that I should cause so many insufferable loads of sorrows to fall upon thy sacred head! Thou art wholly given for me, wholly spent upon my uses, and wholly for every one of the elect. Thou, in the beginning of the work of our redemption, didst suffer nine months' imprisonment in the pure womb of thy holy mother, to redeem me from the eternal servitude of sin, and its miserable

consequents. Holy Jesu, let me be born anew, receive a new birth and a new life, imitating thy graces and excellencies, by which thou art beloved of thy Father, and hast obtained for us a favour and atonement. Let thy holy will be done by me, let all thy will be wrought in me, let thy will be wrought concerning me; that I may do thy pleasure, and submit to the dispensation of thy providence, and conform to thy holy will, and may for ever serve thee in the communion of saints, in the society of thy redeemed ones, now, and in the glories of eternity. Amen.

SECTION III.

The Nativity of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. THE holy maid longed to be a glad mother; and she who carried a burden, whose proper commensuration is the days of eternity, counted the tedious minutes, expecting when the Sun of Righteousness should break forth from his bed, where nine months he hid himself as behind a fruitful cloud. About the same time, God, who in his infinite wisdom does concentre and tie together in one end things of disparity and disproportionate natures, making things improbable to co-operate to what wonder or to what truth he pleases, brought the holy Virgin to Bethlehem, the city of David, "to be taxed," with her husband Joseph, according to a decree upon all the world, issuing from Augustus Cæsar[a]. But this happened in this conjunction of time, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Micah:—"And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel." This rare act of Providence was highly remarkable, because this taxing seems wholly to have been ordered by God, to serve and

[a] Ἦν δὲ ἓν τούτῳ δεύτερον καὶ τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος τοῦ Αὐγούστου βασιλείας, Αὐγούστου δ' ἐπικληθεὶς καὶ τῆς τελευτῆς Ἀντωνίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας ἕνδεκα ἔτος καὶ εἰκοστόν.—*Euseb. l.* i. c. 6. *Histor. Eccles.* Anno scil. tertio Olympiad. 194. Cæsare Augusto et Plautio Silano Coss.

minister to the circumstances of this birth[b]; for this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now king, and received all the revenues of the Fiscus, and paid to Augustus an appointed tribute, after the manner of other kings, friends and relatives of the Roman empire: neither doth it appear, that the Romans laid a new tribute on the Jews, before the confiscation of the goods of Archelaus. Augustus, therefore, sending special delegates to tax every city, made only an inquest[c] after the strength of the Roman empire in men and monies; and did himself no other advantage, but was directed by him, who rules and turns the hearts of princes, that he might, by verifying a prophecy, signify and publish the divinity of the mission and the birth of Jesus.

2. She, that had conceived by the operation of that Spirit, who dwells within the element of love, was no ways impeded in her journey by the greatness of her burden; but arrived at Bethlehem in the throng of strangers, who had so filled up the places of hospitality and public entertainment, that "there was no room" for Joseph and Mary "in the inn." But yet she felt, that it was necessary to retire, where she might softly lay her burden, who began now to call at the gates of his prison, and nature was ready to let him forth. But she, that was mother to the King of all the creatures, could find no other but a stable, a cave of a rock[d], whither she retired; where, when it began to be with her after the manner of women, she humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers, and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculations, "brought forth her first-born into the world."

3. As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pains in the production, as the church, from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now, hath piously believed[e]; though, before his days, there were some opinions to the

[b] Ὁ Αὔγουστος ὑπηρετεῖται τῷ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ τόκῳ διὰ τοῦ προστάγματος τῆς ἀπογραφῆς.—*S. Chrysost. Hom.* 8. *in Matth.*

[c] Vide Suidam in Verbo *Ἀπογραφὴ*. *Dio.* lib. lvi. ἔπεμψεν ἄλλους ἄλλη τά τε τῶν ἰδιωτῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων ἀπογραφομένους.

[d] Juxta propheticum illud, *Isa.* xxxiii. 16. οὗτος οἰκήσει ἐν ὑψηλῷ σκεπαίῳ πέτρας ἰσχυρᾶς· ἄρτος δοθήσεται αὐτῷ, apud LXX. Sed hanc periodum Judæi eraserunt ex Hebræo textu. Sic et Symmachus, ἄρτος δοθήσεται, mysticè Bethlehem, sive Domus panis, indigitatur.

[e] Vide Waddingum, p. 270.

contrary, but certainly neither so pious, nor so reasonable. For to her alone did not the punishment of Eve extend, that "in sorrow she should bring forth:" for where nothing of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabit. For though amongst the daughters of men many conceptions are innocent and holy, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, hallowed by marriage, designed by prudence, seasoned by temperance, conducted by religion towards a just, a hallowed, and a holy end, and yet their productions are in sorrow; yet this of the blessed Virgin might be otherwise, because here sin was no relative, and neither was in the principle nor the derivative, in the act nor in the habit, in the root nor in the branch: there was nothing in this but the sanctification of a virgin's womb, and that could not be the parent of sorrow, especially that gate not having been opened, by which the curse always entered. And as to conceive by the Holy Ghost was glorious, so to bring forth any of "the fruits of the Spirit" is joyful, and full of felicities. And he that came from his grave fast tied with a stone and signature, and into the college of apostles, "the doors being shut," and into the glories of his Father through the solid orbs of all the firmament, came also (as the church piously believes) into the world so, without doing violence to the virginal and pure body of his mother; that he did also leave her virginity entire, to be as a seal, that none might open the gate of that sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut[f]."

4. Although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great Prince, yet I find no story of any one that ministered at it, save only angels, who knew their duty to their Lord, and the great interests of that person; whom, as soon as he was born, they presented to his mother, who could not but receive him with a joy next to the rejoicings of glory and beatific vision, seeing him to be born her son, who was the Son of God, of greater beauty than the sun, purer than angels, more loving than the seraphims, as dear.

[f] Ezek. xliv. 2.

as the eye and heart of God, where he was from eternity engraven, his beloved and his only-begotten.

5. When the virgin-mother now felt the first tenderness and yearnings of a mother's bowels, and saw the Saviour of the world born, poor as her fortunes could represent him, naked as the innocence of Adam, she took him, and "wrapt him in swaddling-clothes;" and after she had a while cradled him in her arms, she "laid him in a manger;" for so was the design of his humility; that as the last scene of his life was represented among thieves, so the first was amongst beasts, the sheep and the oxen; according to that mysterious hymn of the prophet Habakkuk, "His brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power[g]."

6. But this place, which was one of the great instances of his humility, grew to be as venerable as became an instrument[h]; and it was consecrated into a church, the crib into an altar, where first lay that "Lamb of God," which afterwards was sacrificed for the sins of all the world. And when Adrian, the emperor, who intended a great despite to it, built a temple to Venus and Adonis in that place, where the holy virgin-mother, and her more holy Son, were humbly laid; even so he could not obtain, but that, even amongst the Gentile inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, it was held in an account far above scandal and contempt. For God can ennoble even the meanest of creatures, especially if it be but a relative and instrumental to religion, higher than the injuries of scoffers and malicious persons. But it was then a temple full of religion, full of glory, when angels were the ministers, the holy Virgin was the worshipper, and Christ the Deity.

Ad SECTION III.

Considerations upon the Birth of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Jesus desired, with the ardency of an inflamed love, to be born, and to finish the

[g] Hab. iii. 4. In medio animalium cognosceris.—*Sic* LXX.
[h] Ven. Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 8. S. Hieron. epist. 48.

work of our redemption; yet he did not prevent the period of nature, nor break the laws of the womb, and antedate his own sanctions, which he had established for ever. He stayed nine months, and then brake forth "as a giant joyful to run his course." For premature and hasty actions, and such counsels, as know not how to expect the times appointed in God's decree, are like hasty fruit, or a young person snatched away in his florid age, sad and untimely. He that hastens to enjoy his wish before the time, raises his own expectation, and yet makes it unpleasant by impatience, and loseth the pleasure of the fruition when it comes, because he hath made his desires bigger than the thing can satisfy. He that must eat an hour before his time, gives probation of his intemperance or his weakness; and if we dare not trust God with the circumstance of the event, and stay his leisure, either we disrepute the infinity of his wisdom, or give clear demonstration of our own vanity.

2. When God descended to earth, he chose to be born in the suburbs and retirement of a small town, but he was pleased to die at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judæa; which chides our shame and pride, who are willing to publish our gaieties in piazzas and the corners of the streets of most populous places; but our defects, and the instruments of our humiliation, we carry into deserts, and cover with the night, and hide them under ground, thinking no secrecy dark enough to hide our shame, nor any theatre large enough to behold our pompous vanities; for so we make provisions for pride, and take great care to exclude humility.

3. When the holy Virgin now perceived, that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation and entrance into the world, she brought forth the holy Jesus, who, like light through transparent glass, passed through, or a ripe pomegranate from a fruitful tree, fell to the earth, without doing violence to its nurse and parent. She had no ministers to attend but angels, and neither her poverty nor her piety would permit her to provide other nurses; but herself did the offices of a tender and pious parent. She kissed him, and worshipped him, and thanked him that he would be born of her, and she suckled him, and bound him in her arms and

swaddling-bands; and when she had represented to God her first scene of joy and eucharist, she softly laid him in the manger, till her desires and his own necessities called her to take him, and to rock him softly in her arms: and from this deportment she read a lecture of piety and maternal care, which mothers should perform toward their children when they are born, not to neglect any of that duty, which nature and maternal piety requires.

4. Jesus was pleased to be born of a poor mother, in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of humility and poverty. And no man will have cause to complain of his coarse robe, if he remembers the swaddling-clothes of this holy Child; nor to be disquieted at his hard bed, when he considers Jesus laid in a manger; nor to be discontented at his thin table, when he calls to mind, the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast-milk. But since the eternal wisdom of the Father, who "knew to choose the good, and refuse the evil," did choose a life of poverty, it gives us demonstration, that riches and honours, those idols of the world's esteem, are so far from creating true felicities, that they are not of themselves eligible in the number of good things: however, no man is to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which many wise men make vows, and of which the holy Jesus made election, and his apostles after him made public profession. And if any man will choose and delight in the affluence of temporal good things, suffering himself to be transported with caitive affections in the pleasures of every day, he may well make a question, whether he shall speed as well hereafter[1]; since God's usual method is, that they only, who follow Christ here, shall be with him for ever.

5. The condition of the person who was born, is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty and a world of inconveniences, is "the Son of the living God," of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars; he is God eternal. He is also, by reason of the personal union of

[1] Οἶει σὺ τοὺς θανόντας, ὦ Νικήρατε, τρυφῆς ἀπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ, πεφυγέναι τὸ θεῖον;—*Diphilus.*

the Divinity with his human nature, "the Son of God;" not by adoption, as good men and beatified angels are, but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is "the heir" of his Father's glories and possessions, not by succession, (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication. He is "the express image of his Father's person," according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his Godhead being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity. And, after all this, he is our Saviour; that to our duties of wonder and adoration we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. "Verè Verbum hoc est abbreviatum," saith the prophet; the eternal Word of the Father is shortened to the dimensions of an infant.

6. Here then are concentred the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility, and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures; if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity; and in the manger, where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is God, his throne is in the heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is man, he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is seated upon a super-exalted throne; as man, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory, at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle-bands. As God, he is encircled with millions of angels; as man, in the company of beasts. As God, he is the eternal Word of the Father, eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient, and without need: and yet he submitted himself to a condition, imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous. And this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason and our passions and capacities upon that saying of St. Paul,—

" He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed[k]."

7. Upon the consideration of these glories, if a pious soul shall, upon the supports of faith and love, enter into the stable where this great King was born, and with affections behold every member of the holy body, and thence pass into the soul of Jesus, we may see a scheme of holy meditations, enough to entertain all the degrees of our love and of our understanding, and make the mystery of the nativity as fruitful of holy thoughts, as it was of blessings to us. And it may serve instead of a description of the person of Jesus, conveyed to us in imperfect and apocryphal schemes. If we could behold his sacred feet with those affections which the holy Virgin did, we have transmitted to us those mysteries in story, which she had first in part by spiritual and divine infused light, and afterwards by observation. Those holy feet, tender, and unable to support his sacred body, should bear him over all the province of his cure, with great zeal for the gaining of souls, to the belief and obedience of his holy laws; those are the feet, that should walk upon seas and hills of water, as upon firm pavement; at which the lepers and diseased persons should stoop, and gather health up; which Mary Magdalen should wash with tears, and wipe with her hair, and anoint with costly nard, as expressions of love and adoration, and there find absolution and remedy for her sins; and which, finally, should be rent by the nails of the cross, and afterwards ascend above the heavens, making the earth to be his footstool. From hence take patterns of imitation, that our piety be symbolical, that our affections be passionate and eucharistical, full of love, and wonder, and adoration; that our feet tread in the same steps, and that we transfer the symbol into mystery, and the mystery to devotion, praying the holy Jesus to actuate the same mercies in us, which were finished at his holy feet, forgiving our sins, healing our sicknesses; and then place ourselves irremoveably, becoming his disciples, and strictly observing the rules of his holy institution, " sitting at the feet" of this our greatest Master.

[k] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

8. In the same manner a pious person may (with the blessed Virgin) pass to the consideration of his holy hands, which were so often lifted up to God in prayer; whose touch was miraculous and medicinal, cleansing lepers, restoring perishing limbs, opening blind eyes, raising dead persons to life; those hands which fed many thousands, by two miracles of multiplication; that purged the temple from profaneness; that, in a sacramental manner, bare his own body, and gave it to be the food and refreshment of elect souls, and after were cloven and rent upon the cross, till the wounds became (after the resurrection) so many transparencies and glorious instruments of solemn, spiritual, and efficacious benediction. Transmit this meditation into affections and practices, "lifting up pure hands" in prayer, that our devotions be united to the merits of his glorious intercession; and putting ourselves into his hands and holy providence, let us beg those effects upon our souls and spiritual cures, which his precious hands did operate upon their bodies, transferring those similitudes to our ghostly and personal advantages.

9. We may also behold his holy breast, and consider, that there lay that sacred heart, like the dove within the ark, speaking peace to us, being the regiment of love and sorrows, the fountain of both the sacraments, running out in the two holy streams of blood and water, when the rock was smitten, when his holy side was pierced: and there, with St. John, let us lay our head, and place our heart, and thence draw a treasure of holy revelations and affections, that we may rest in him only, and upon him lay our burdens, filling every corner of our heart with thoughts of the most amiable and beloved Jesus.

10. In like manner we may unite the day of his nativity with the day of his passion, and consider all the parts of his body, as it was instrumental in all the work of our redemption; and so imitate, and in some proportion partake of, that great variety of sweetnesses, and amorous reflexes, and gracious intercourses, which passed between the blessed Virgin and the holy Child, according to his present capacities, and the clarity of that light, which was communicated to her by Divine infusion. And all the members of this blessed Child, his eyes, his face, his head, all the organs of

his senses, afford variety of entertainment and motion to our affections, according as they served, in their several employments and co-operations, in the mysteries of our restitution.

11. But his body was but his soul's upper garment, and the considerations of this are as immaterial and spiritual as the soul itself, and more immediate to the mystery of the nativity. This soul is of the same nature and substance with ours; in this inferior to the angels, that of itself it is incomplete, and discursive in a lower order of ratiocination; but in this superior: 1. That it is personally united to the Divinity, full of the Holy Ghost, overrunning with grace, which was dispensed to it without measure. (And by the mediation of this union, as itself is exalted far above all orders of intelligences, so we also have contracted alliance with God, teaching us not to unravel our excellencies by infamous deportments.) 2. Here also we may meditate, that his memory is indeterminable and unalterable, ever remembering to do us good, and to present our needs to God by the means of his holy intercession. 3. That his understanding is without ignorance, knowing the secrets of our hearts, full of mysterious secrets of his Father's kingdom, in which "all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden[1]." 4. That his will is impeccable, entertained with an uninterrupted act of love to God, greater than all angels and beatified spirits present to God in the midst of the transportations and ravishments of paradise: that this will is full of love to us, of humility in itself, of conformity to God, wholly resigned by acts of adoration and obedience. It was moved by six wings; zeal of the honour of God, and compunction for our sins, pity to our miseries, and hatred of our impieties; desires of satisfying the wrath of God, and great joy at the consideration of all the fruits of his nativity; the appeasing of his Father, the redemption of his brethren. And upon these wings he mounted up into the throne of glory, carrying our nature with him above the seats of angels. These second considerations present themselves to all, that with piety and devotion behold the holy Babe lying in the obscure and humble place of his nativity.

[1] Col. ii. 3.

THE PRAYER.

HOLY and immortal Jesus, I adore and worship thee, with the lowest prostrations and humility of soul and body, and give thee all thanks for that great love to us, whereof thy nativity hath made demonstration; for that humility of thine, expressed in the poor and ignoble circumstances, which thou didst voluntarily choose in the manner of thy birth. And I present to thy holy humanity, enchased in the adorable Divinity, my body and soul; humbly desiring, that as thou didst clothe thyself with a human body, thou mayest invest me with the robes of righteousness, covering my sins, enabling my weaknesses, and sustaining my mortality, till I shall finally, in conformity to thy beauties and perfections, be clothed with the stole of glory. Amen.

II.

Vouchsafe to come to me by a more intimate and spiritual approximation, that so thou mayest lead me to thy Father; for of myself I cannot move one step towards thee. Take me by the hand, place me in thy heart, that there I may live, and there I may die: that as thou hast united our nature to thy eternal being, thou mightest also unite my person to thine by the interior adunations of love, and obedience, and conformity. Let thy ears be open to my prayers, thy merciful eyes look upon my miseries, thy holy hands be stretched out to my relief and succour: let some of those precious distilling tears, which nature, and thy compassion, and thy sufferings, did cause to distil and drop from those sacred fontinels, water my stony heart, and make it soft, apt for the impressions of a melting, obedient, and corresponding love; and moisten mine eyes, that I may, upon thy stock of pity and weeping, mourn for my sins; that so my tears and sorrows, being drops of water coming from that holy Rock, may indeed be united unto thine, and made precious by such holy mixtures. Amen.

III.

Blessed Jesus, now that thou hast sanctified and exalted human nature, and made even my body precious by a personal uniting it to the Divinity, teach me so reverently to account of it, that I may not dare to profane it with impure lusts or caitive affections, and unhallow that ground, where thy holy feet have trodden. Give to me ardent desires, and efficacious prosecutions of these holy effects, which thou didst design for us in thy nativity, and other parts of our redemption: give me great confidence in thee, which thou hast encouraged by the exhibition of so glorious favours; great sorrow and confusion of face at the sight of mine own imperfections, and estrangements, and great distances from thee, and the perfections of thy soul; and bring me to thee by the strictnesses of a zealous and affectionate imitation of those sanctities, which, next to the hypostatical union, added lustre and excellency to thy humanity; that I may live here with thee in the expresses of a holy life, and die with thee by mortification and an unwearied patience; and reign with thee in immortal glories, world without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE I.

Of nursing Children, in imitation of the blessed Virgin-Mother.

1. THESE later ages of the world have declined into a softness above the effeminacy of Asian princes, and have contracted customs, which those innocent and healthful days of our ancestors knew not; whose piety was natural, whose charity was operative, whose policy was just and valiant, and whose economy was sincere, and proportionable to the dispositions and requisites of nature. And in this particular, the good women of old gave one of their instances[a]. The

[a] Quòd si pudica mulier in partem juvet
Domum atque dulces liberos:
(Sabina qualis, aut perusta solibus
Pernicis uxor Appuli)
Non me Lucrina juverint conchylia
Magis, &c. *Hor. Epod.* ii.

greatest personages nursed their own children, did the work of mothers, and thought it was unlikely, women should become virtuous by ornaments and superadditions of morality, who did decline the laws and prescriptions of nature, whose principles supply us with the first and most common rules of manners and more perfect actions. In imitation of whom, and especially of the Virgin Mary, who was mother and nurse to the holy Jesus, I shall endeavour to correct those softnesses and unnatural rejections of children, which are popular up to a custom and fashion, even where no necessities of nature or just reason can make excuse.

2. And I cannot think the question despicable, and the duty of meanest consideration; although it be specified in an office of small esteem, and suggested to us by the principles of reason, and not by express sanctions of Divinity. For although other actions are more perfect and spiritual, yet this is more natural and humane; other things, being superadded to a full duty, rise higher, but this builds stronger, and is like a part of the foundation, having no lustre, but much strength; and however the others are full of ornament, yet this hath in it some degrees of necessity, and possibly is with more danger and irregularity omitted, than actions, which spread their leaves fairer, and look more gloriously.

3. First: Here I consider, that there are many sins in the scene of the body and the matter of sobriety, which are highly criminal, and yet the laws of God, expressed in Scripture, name them not; but men are taught to distinguish them by that reason, which is given us by nature, and is imprinted in our understanding, in order to the conservation of human kind. For since every creature hath something in it sufficient to propagate the kind, and to conserve the individuals from perishing in confusions and general disorders, which in beasts we call instinct, that is, an habitual or prime disposition to do certain things, which are proportionable to the end whither it is designed; man also, if he be not more imperfect, must have the like: and because he knows and makes reflections upon his own acts, and understands the reason of it, that which in them is instinct, in him is natural reason, which is, a desire to preserve himself and his own kind; and differs from instinct, because he under-

stands his instinct and the reasonableness of it, and they do not. But man, being a higher thing, even in the order of creation, and designed to a more noble end in his animal capacity, his argumentative instinct is larger than the natural instinct of beasts: for he hath instincts in him, in order to the conservation of society[b], and therefore hath principles, that is, he hath natural desires to it for his own good; and because he understands them, they are called principles, and laws of nature, but are no other than what I have now declared; for beasts do the same things we do, and have many the same inclinations, which in us are the laws of nature, even all which we have in order to our common end. But that, which in beasts is nature and an impulsive force, in us must be duty and an inviting power: we must do the same things with an actual or habitual designation of that end, to which God designs beasts, (supplying by his wisdom their want of understanding,) and then, what is mere nature in them, in us is natural reason. And therefore marriage in men is made sacred, when the mixtures of other creatures are so merely natural, that they are not capable of being virtuous; because men are bound to intend that end, which God made. And this, with the superaddition of other ends, of which marriage is representative in part, and in part effective, does consecrate marriage, and makes it holy and mysterious. But then there are in marriage many duties, which we are taught by instinct; that is, by that reason whereby we understand, what are the best means to promote the end, which we have assigned us. And by these laws all unnatural mixtures are made unlawful, and the decencies which are to be observed in marriage, are prescribed us by this.

4. Secondly: Upon the supposition of this discourse, I consider again, that, although to observe this instinct, or these laws of nature, (in which I now have instanced,) be no great virtue in any eminency of degree, (as no man is much commended for not killing himself, or for not degenerating into beastly lusts;) yet, to prevaricate some of these laws, may become almost the greatest sin in the world. And

[b] Naturale jus partim, τὸ δίκαιον, πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως λυσιτελέστατον· partim, τὸ πρὸς καλοκἀγαθίαν κοινὸν ἅπασι, καὶ μόνον ἱκανὸν διασώζειν τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίον.—*Joseph. Orig.* xvi. 10.

therefore, although to live according to nature be a testimony fit to be given to a sober and a temperate man, and rises no higher; yet, to do an action against nature, is the greatest dishonour and impiety in the world, (I mean of actions whose scene lies in the body,) and disentitles us to all relations to God, and vicinity to virtue.

5. Thirdly: Now, amongst actions which we are taught by nature, some concern the being and the necessities of nature, some appertain to her convenience and advantage: and the transgressions of these respectively have their heightenings or depressions; and, therefore, to kill a man, is worse than some præternatural pollutions, because more destructive of the end and designation of nature, and the purpose of instinct.

6. Fourthly: Every part of this instinct is then, in some sense, a law, when it is in a direct order to a necessary end, and by that is made reasonable. I say, in some sense it is a law; that is, it is in a near disposition to become a law. It is a rule, without obligation to a particular punishment, beyond the effect of the natural inordination and obliquity of the act; it is not the measure of a moral good or evil, but of the natural; that is, of comely and uncomely. For if, in the individuals, it should fail, or that there pass some greater obligation upon the person in order to a higher end, not consistent with those means designed in order to the lesser end, in that particular it is no fault, but sometimes a virtue. And, therefore, although it be an instinct, or reasonable towards many purposes, that every one should beget a man in his own image, in order to the preservation of nature; yet, if there be a superaddition of another and higher end, and contrary means persuaded in order to it, (such as is holy celibate, or virginity, in order to a spiritual life, in some persons,) there the instinct of nature is very far from passing obligation upon the conscience, and in that instance ceases to be reasonable. And, therefore, the Romans, who invited men to marriage with privileges, and punished morose and ungentle natures that refused it, yet they had their chaste and unmarried vestals; the first, in order to the commonwealth; these, in a nearer order to religion.

7. Fifthly: These instincts or reasonable inducements become laws, obliging us, in conscience and in the way of

religion; and the breach of them is directly criminal, when the instance violates any end of justice, or charity, or sobriety, either designed in nature's first intention, or superinduced by God or man. For every thing that is unreasonable to some certain purpose, is not presently criminal, much less is it against the law of nature, (unless every man, that goes out of his way, sins against the law of nature); and every contradicting of a natural desire or inclination, is not a sin against a law of nature. For the restraining sometimes of a lawful and a permitted desire is an act of great virtue, and pursues a greater reason; as in the former instance. But those things only, against which such a reason as mixes with charity or justice, or something that is now in order to a farther end of a commanded instance of piety, may be without error brought, those things are only criminal. And God, having first made our instincts reasonable, hath now made our reason and instincts to be spiritual; and having sometimes restrained our instincts, and always made them regular, he hath, by the intermixture of other principles, made a separation of instinct from instinct, leaving one in the form of natural inclination, and they rise no higher than a permission or a decency, it is lawful, or it is comely so to do: (for no man can affirm it to be a duty to kill him, that assaults my life, or to maintain my children for ever without their own industry, when they are able, what degrees of natural fondness soever I have towards them; nor that I sin, if I do not marry, when I can contain:) and yet every one of these may proceed from the affections and first inclinations of nature. But until they mingle with justice, or charity, or some instance of religion and obedience, they are no laws; the other that are so mingled, being raised to duty and religion. Nature inclines us, and reason judges it apt and requisite in order to certain ends; but then every particular of it is made to be an act of religion from some other principle: as yet, it is but fit and reasonable, not religion and particular duty, till God or man hath interposed. But whatsoever particular in nature was fit to be made a law of religion, is made such by the superaddition of another principle; and this is derived to us by tradition from Adam to Noah, or else transmitted to us by the consent of all the world upon a natural and prompt reason, or else by some other instrument derived to us from God, but especially by

the Christian religion, which hath adopted all those things which we call "things honest, things comely, and things of good report," into a law and a duty: as appears Phil. iv. 8.

8. Upon these propositions I shall infer, by way of instance, that it is a duty, that women should nurse their own children. For, first, it is taught to women by that instinct which nature hath implanted in them. For, as Phavorinus[c] the philosopher discoursed, it is but to be half a mother to bring forth children, and not to nourish them; and it is some kind of abortion, or an exposing of the infant, which, in the reputation of all wise nations, is infamous and uncharitable. And if the name of mother be an appellative of affection and endearments, why should the mother be willing to divide it with a stranger? The earth is the mother of us all, not only because we were made of her red clay, but chiefly that she daily gives us food from her bowels and breasts; and plants and beasts give nourishment to their offsprings, after their production, with greater tenderness than they bare them in their wombs: and yet women give nourishment to the embryo, which, whether it be deformed or perfect, they know not, and cannot love what they never saw; and yet when they do see it, when they have rejoiced that a child is born, and forgotten the sorrows of production, they, who then can first begin to love it, if they begin to divorce the infant from the mother, the object from the affection, cut off the opportunities and occasions of their charity or piety.

9. For why hath nature given to women two exuberant fontinels, which, "like two roes that are twins, feed among the lilies[d]," and drop milk like dew from Hermon, and hath invited that nourishment from the secret recesses, where the infant dwelt at first, up to the breast where naturally now the child is cradled in the entertainments of love and maternal embraces[e]; but that nature, having removed the babe, and carried its meat after it, intends that it should be preserved[f]

[c] Apud A. Gellium, l. xii. c. 1.

[d] Cant. 4. 5.

[e] Ilicet exundans claustris, erumpere gestit
Humor———
Si prohibes, furit in mammis, turbasque dolorum
Miscet, et ingratâ pœnas à matre reposcit.—*Sammarth. Pædotroph.*

[f] Sponte fluunt alimenta suis accommoda rebus,
Cognatumque bibunt membra haud invita liquorem.—*Idem.*

by the matter and ingredients of its constitution, and have the same diet prepared with a more mature and proportionable digestion? If nature intended them not for nourishment, I am sure it less intended them for pride and wantonness; they are needless excrescences and vices of nature, unless employed in nature's work and proper intendment. And if it be a matter of consideration, of what blood children are derived, we may also consider, that the derivation continues after the birth; and therefore, abating the sensuality, the nurse is as much the mother as she that brought it forth; and so much the more, as there is a longer communication of constituent nourishment (for so are the first emanations) in this, than in the other. So that here is first the instinct, or prime intendment, of nature.

10. Secondly: And that this instinct may also become humane and reasonable, we see it by experience in many places, that foster-children are dearer to the nurse than to the mother, as receiving and ministering respectively perpetual prettinesses of love, and fondness, and trouble, and need, and invitations, and all the instruments of endearment; besides a vicinity of dispositions and relative tempers by the communication of blood and spirits from the nurse to the suckling, which makes use the more natural, and nature more accustomed. And, therefore, the affections, which these exposed or derelict children bear to their mothers, have no grounds of nature or assiduity, but civility and opinion[s]; and that little of love, which is abated from the foster-parents, upon public report that they are not natural, that little is transferred to mothers upon the same opinion, and no more. Hence come those unnatural aversions, those unrelenting dispositions, those carelessnesses and incurious deportments towards their children, which are such ill sown seeds, from whence may arise up a bitterness of disposition and mutual provocation. The affection, which children bear to their nurses, was highly remarked in the instance of Scipio Asiaticus, who rejected the importunity of his brother Africanus in behalf of the ten captains, who were condemned for offering violence to the Vestals, but pardoned them at the request of his foster-sister:

[s] Obliteratis et abolitis nativæ pietatis elementis, quicquid ità educati liberi amare patrem atque matrem videntur, magnam partem non naturalis ille amor est, sed civilis et opinabilis.—*Pharor. apud A. Gellium.*

and being asked, why he did more for his nurse's daughter than for his own mother's son? gave this answer: "I esteem her rather to be my mother, that brought me up, than her, that bare me and forsook me." And I have read the observation, that many tyrants have killed their mothers, but never any did violence to his nurse; as if they were desirous to suck the blood of their mother raw, which she refused to give to them digested into milk. And the bastard-brother of the Gracchi, returning from his victories in Asia to Rome, presented his mother with a jewel of silver, and his nurse with a girdle of gold, upon the same account. Sometimes children are exchanged, and artificial bastardies introduced into a family, and the right heir supplanted. It happened so to Artabanus, king of Epirus. His child was changed at nurse, and the son of a mean knight succeeded in the kingdom; the event of which was this: The nurse too late discovered the treason; a bloody war was commenced; both the pretenders slain in battle; and the kingdom itself was usurped by Alexander, the brother to Olympias, the wife of Philip the Macedonian. At the best, though there happen no such extravagant and rare accidents, yet it is not likely, a stranger should love the child better than the mother; and if the mother's care could suffer it to be exposed, a stranger's care may suffer it to be neglected. For how shall a hireling endure the inconveniences, the tediousnesses, and unhandsomenesses of a nursery, when she, whose natural affection might have made it pleasant, out of wantonness or softness hath declined the burden? But the sad accidents, which, by too frequent observation, are daily seen happening to nurse-children, give great probation, that this intendment of nature, designing mothers to be the nurses, that their affection might secure and increase their care, and the care best provide for their babes, is most reasonable, and proportionable to the discourses of humanity.

11. But as this instinct was made reasonable, so in this also the reason is in order to grace and spiritual effects; and, therefore, is among those things, which God hath separated from the common instincts of nature, and made properly to be laws, by the mixtures of justice and charity. For it is part of that education, which mothers, as a duty, owe to their children, that they do, in all circumstances, and with all their

powers, which God to that purpose gave them, promote their capacities and improve their faculties[h]. Now, in this also, as the temper of the body is considerable in order to the inclinations of the soul, so is the nurse in order to the temper of the body; and a lamb sucking a goat, or a kid sucking an ewe, change their fleece and hair respectively, say naturalists. For if the soul of man were put into the body of a mole, it could not see nor speak, because it is not fitted with an instrument apt and organical to the faculty; and when the soul hath its proper instruments, its music is pleasant or harsh, according to the sweetness or the unevenness of the string it touches: for David himself could not have charmed Saul's melancholic spirit with the strings of his bow, or the wood of his spear. And just so are the actions or dispositions of the soul, angry or pleasant, lustful or cold, querulous or passionate, according as the body is disposed by the various intermixtures of natural qualities. And as the carelessness of nurses hath sometimes returned children to their parents crooked, consumptive, half starved, and unclean, from the impurities of nature; so their society and their nourishment together have disposed them to peevishness, to lust, to drunkenness, to pride, to low and base demeanours, to stubbornness. And as a man would have been unwilling to have had a child by Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool; so he would, in all reason, be as unwilling to have had her to be the nurse: for very often mothers by the birth do not transmit their imperfections, yet it seldom happens, but the nurse does: which is the more considerable, because nurses are commonly persons of no great rank, certainly lower than the mother, and, by consequence, liker to return their children with the lower and more servile conditions; and commonly those vainer people teach them to be peevish and proud, to lie, or at least seldom give them any first principles contrariant to the nurse's vice. And, therefore, it concerns the parent's care, in order to a virtuous life of the child, to secure its first seasonings; because, whatever it sucks in first, it swallows and believes

[h] Nam Gracchorum eloquentiæ multum contulisse accepimus Corneliam Matrem. — *Quint.* l. i. c. 1. Protinus ut erit parens factus, acrem quàm maximè curam impendat, ante omnia ne sit vitiosus sermo nutricibus, quas, si fieri posset, sapientes Chrysippus optavit. — *Quint.* lib. i. cap. 1. Γάλα ἀλλότριον βλαβερὸν, γάλα ἴδιον ὠφέλιμον. — *Hippoc. l. de Alimento.* καθάπερ αἱ τίτθαι γε, στίζας καπῶς. — *Aristoph.*

infinitely, and practises easily, and continues longest. And this is more proper for a mother's care[i]; while the nurse thinks, that giving the child suck, and keeping its body clean, is all her duty. But the mother cannot think herself so easily discharged. And this consideration is material in all cases, be the choice of the nurse never so prudent and curious; and it is not easily apprehended to be the portion of her care to give it spiritual milk, and therefore it intrenches very much upon impiety and positive relinquishing the education of their children, when mothers expose the spirit of the child either to its own weaker inclinations, or the wicked principles of an ungodly nurse, or the carelessness of any less obliged person.

12. And then let me add, that a child sucks the nurse's milk, and digests her conditions, if they be never so bad[k], but seldom gets any good. For virtue being superaddition to nature, and perfections not radical in the body, but contradictions to, and meliorations of, natural indispositions, does not easily convey itself by ministrations of food, as vice does; which, in most instances, is nothing but mere nature grown to custom, and not mended by grace: so that it is probable enough, such natural distemperatures may pass in the rivulets of milk, like evil spirits in a white garment, when virtues are of harder purchase, and dwell so low in the heart, that they but rarely pass through the fountains of generation. And, therefore, let no mother venture her child upon a stranger, whose heart she less knows than her own. And because few of those nicer women think better of others than themselves, (since, out of self-love, they neglect their own bowels,) it is but an act of improvidence to let my child derive imperfections from one, of whom I have not so good an opinion as of myself.

13. And if those many blessings and holy prayers, which the child needs, or his askings or sicknesses, or the mother's fears or joys, respectively, do occasion, should not be cast into this account; yet those principles, which, in all cases wherein the neglect is vicious, are the causes of the exposing the child, are extremely against the piety and charity of

[i] Ἄλλοτε μητρυιὴ πέλει ἡμέρη, ἄλλοτε μήτηρ.—*Fictum Proverb.*

[k] Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres.—*Virgil.* λεαίνας μασθὸν ἐθήλαζε.

Christian religion, which prescribes severity and austere deportment, and the labours of love, and exemplar tenderness of affections, and piety to children, which are the most natural and nearest relations the parents have. That religion, which commands us to visit and to tend sick strangers, and wash the feet of the poor, and dress their ulcers, and sends us upon charitable embassies into unclean prisons, and bids us lay down our lives for one another, is not pleased with a niceness and sensual curiosity (that I may not name the wantonnesses of lusts), which denies suck to our own children. What is more humane and affectionate than Christianity? and what is less natural and charitable than to deny the expresses of a mother's affection? which certainly to good women is the greatest trouble in the world, and the greatest violence to their desires, if they should not express and minister.

14. And it would be considered, whether those mothers, who have neglected their first duties of piety and charity, can expect so prompt and easy returns of duty and piety from their children, whose best foundation is love; and that love strongest, which is most natural; and that most natural, which is conveyed by the first ministries and impresses of nourishment and education. And if love descends more strongly than it ascends, and commonly falls from the parents upon the children in cataracts, and returns back again up to the parents but in gentle dews; if the child's affection keeps the same proportions towards such unkind mothers, it will be as little as atoms in the sun, and never express itself but when the mother needs it not; that is, in the sunshine of a clear fortune.

15. This, then, is amongst those instincts, which are natural, heightened first by reason, and then exalted by grace into the obligation of a law; and, being amongst the sanctions of nature, its prevarication is a crime very near those sins, which divines, in detestation of their malignity, call sins against nature, and is never to be excused but in cases of necessity[1] or greater charity; as when the mother cannot be a nurse by reason of natural disability, or is afflicted with a

[1] Necessitas, magnum imbecillitatis humanæ patrocinium, quicquid cogit excusat.—*Senec.*

disease, which might be transmitted in the milk; or, in case of the public necessities of a kingdom, for the securing of succession in the royal family. And yet, concerning this last, Lycurgus made a law, that the noblest amongst the Spartan women, though their kings' wives, should at least nurse their eldest son, and the plebeians should nurse all theirs; and Plutarch reports, that the second son of king Themistes inherited the kingdom in Sparta, only because he was nursed with his mother's milk, and the eldest was therefore rejected, because a stranger was his nurse. And that queens have suckled and nursed their own children, is no very unusual kindness in the simplicity and hearty affections of elder ages, as is to be seen in Herodotus and other historians. I shall only remark one instance, out of the Spanish chronicles, which Henry Stephens, in his apology for Herodotus, reports to have heard from thence related by a noble personage, Monsieur Marillac: That a Spanish lady, married into France, nursed her child with so great a tenderness and jealousy, that, having understood the little prince once to have sucked a stranger, she was unquiet, till she had forced him to vomit it up again. In other cases, the crime lies at their door, who enforce neglect upon the other, and is heightened in proportion to the motive of the omission; as, if wantonness or pride be the parent of the crime, the issue, besides its natural deformity, hath the excrescences of pride or lust to make it more ugly.

16. To such mothers I propound the example of the holy Virgin, who had the honour to be visited by an angel; yet, after the example of the saints in the Old Testament, she gave to the holy Jesus drink from those bottles, which himself had filled for his own drinking; and her paps were as surely blessed for giving him suck, as her womb for bearing him: and reads a lecture of piety and charity, which if we deny to our children, there is then in the world left no argument or relation great enough to kindle it from a cinder to a flame. God gives dry breasts, for a curse to some, for an affliction to others; but those, that invite it to them by voluntary arts, "love not blessing, therefore shall it be far from them." And I remember, that it was said concerning Annius Minutius the censor, that he thought it a prodigy, and extremely

ominous to Rome, that a Roman lady refused to nurse her child, and yet gave suck to a puppy, that her milk might, with more safety, be dried up with artificial applications. Let none, therefore, divide the interests of their own children; for she that appeared before Solomon, and would have the child divided, was not the true mother, and was the more culpable of the two.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal God, Father of the creatures, and King of all the world, who hast imprinted in all the sons of thy creation principles and abilities to serve the end of their own preservation, and to men hast superadded reason, making those first propensities of nature to be reasonable in order to society, and a conversation in communities and bodies politic, and hast, by several laws and revelations, directed our reasons to nearer applications to thee, and performance of thy great end, the glory of our Lord and Father; teach me strictly to observe the order of creation, and the designs of the creatures, that in my order I may do that service, which every creature does in its proper capacity. Lord, let me be as constant in the ways of religion, as the sun in his course; as ready to follow the intimations of thy Spirit, as little birds are to obey the directions of thy providence, and the conduct of thy hand. And let me never, by evil customs, or vain company, or false persuasions, extinguish those principles of morality and right reason, which thou hast imprinted in my understanding, in my creation and education, and which thou hast ennobled by the superadditions of Christian institution; that I may live according to the rules of nature in such things, which she teaches, modestly, temperately, and affectionately, in all the parts of my natural and political relations; and that I, proceeding from nature to grace, may henceforth go on from grace to glory, the crown of all obedience, prudeat and holy walking, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SECTION IV.

Of the great and glorious Accidents, happening about the Birth of Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the birth of Christ was destitute of the usual excrescences and less necessary pomps, which used to signify and illustrate the birth of princes; yet his first humility was made glorious with presages, miracles, and significations from heaven, which did not only, like the furniture of a princely bedchamber, speak the riches of the parent, or greatness of the son within its own walls, but did declare to all the world, that their prince was born, publishing it with figures and representments almost as great as its empire.

2. For, when all the world did expect, that in Judæa should be born their prince, and that the incredulous world had, in their observation, slipped by their true prince, because he came not in pompous and secular illustrations; upon that very stock Vespasian[a] was nursed up in hope of the Roman empire, and that hope made him great in designs; and they being prosperous, made his fortunes correspond to his hopes, and he was endeared and engaged upon that fortune by the prophecy, which was never intended him by the prophet. But the fortune of the Roman monarchy was not great enough for this prince designed by the old prophets. And, therefore, it was not without the influence of a Divinity, that his decessor Augustus, about the time of Christ's nativity, refused to be called Lord[b]; possibly it was, to entertain the people with some hopes of restitution of their liberties, till he had griped the monarchy with a stricter and faster hold. But the Christians were apt to believe, that it was upon the prophecy of a sybil foretelling the birth of a greater prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration; and that the prince was about that time born in Judæa[c], the oracle, which was dumb to Augustus's question, told him unasked, the devil having no tongue permitted him but one to proclaim that "an Hebrew child was his Lord and enemy."

[a] Sueton. in Vita Vesp. Vide etiam Ciceron. de Divin.
[b] Orosius, l. vi. c. 22. [c] Suidas in Histor. Verb. Augustus.

3. At the birth of which child, there was an universal peace through all the world. For then it was, that Augustus Cæsar[d], having composed all the wars of the world, did, the third time, cause the gates of Janus's temple to be shut; and this peace continued for twelve years, even till the extreme old age of the prince, until rust had sealed the temple doors, which opened not till the sedition of the Athenians, and the rebellion of the Dacians, caused Augustus to arm. For he that was born, was the Prince of Peace, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his brother; and to make, by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of a holy doctrine, such happy atonements between disagreeing natures, such confederations and societies between enemies, that "the wolf and the lamb should lie down together, and a little child;" boldly, and without danger, "put his finger in the nest and cavern of an asp[e]." And it could be no less than miraculous, that so great a body as the Roman empire, consisting of so many parts, whose constitutions were differing, their humours contrary, their interests contradicting each other's greatness, and all these violently oppressed by an usurping power, should have no limb out of joint, not so much as an aching tooth, or a rebelling humour, in that huge collection of parts; but so it seemed good in the eye of Heaven, by so great and good a symbol, to declare not only the greatness, but the goodness, of the Prince, that was then born in Judæa, the Lord of all the world.

4. But because the heavens, as well as the earth, are his creatures, and do serve him, at his birth he received a sign in heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were "keeping watch over their flocks by night," near that part where Jacob did use to feed his cattle, when he was in the land of Canaan, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Needs must the shepherds be afraid, when an angel came arrayed in glory, and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their senses and scatter their understandings. But "the angel said unto them, Fear not; for I bring unto you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For

[d] Orosius. [e] Isa. xi. 6.

unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The shepherds needed not be invited to go see this glorious sight; but, lest their fancy should rise up to an expectation of a prince as externally glorious, as might be hoped for upon the consequence of so glorious an apparition, the angel, to prevent the mistake, told them of a sign, which, indeed, was no other than the thing signified; but yet was therefore a sign, because it was so remote from the common probability and expectation of such a birth, that, by being a miracle, so great a prince should be born so poorly, it became an instrument to signify itself, and all the other parts of mysterious consequence. For the angel said, "This shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapt in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger."

5. But as light, when it first begins to gild the east, scatters indeed the darknesses from the earth, but ceases not to increase its flame, till it hath made perfect day; so it happened now, in this apparition of the angel of light: he appeared and told his message, and did shine, but the light arose higher and higher, till midnight was as bright as mid-day. For "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host;" and after the angel had told his message in plain song, the whole chorus joined in descant, and sang an hymn to the tune and sense of Heaven, where glory is paid to God in eternal and never-ceasing offices, and whence good will descends upon men in perpetual and never-stopping torrents. Their song was, "Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men:" by this song not only referring to the strange peace[f], which at that time put all the world in ease; but to the great peace, which this new-born Prince should make between his Father and all mankind.

6. As soon as these blessed choristers had sung their Christmas carol, and taught the church a hymn to put into her offices for ever in the anniversary of this festivity, "the angels returned into heaven," and "the shepherds went to Bethlehem, to see this thing, which the Lord had made

[f] Igitur eo tempore, *i. e.* eo anno, quo firmissimam verissimamque pacem ordinatione Dei Cæsar composuit, natus est Christus; cujus adventui pax ista famulata est: in cujus ortu audientibus hominibus exsultantes angeli cecinerunt, "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax," &c.—*P. Orosius.*

known unto them. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." Just as the angel had prepared their expectation, they found the narrative verified, and saw the glory and the mystery of it by that representment, which was made by the heavenly ministers, seeing God through the veil of a child's flesh, the heir of Heaven wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and a person, to whom the angels did minister, laid in a manger; and they beheld, and wondered, and worshipped.

7. But as precious liquor, warmed and heightened by a flame, first crowns the vessel, and then dances over its brim into the fire, increasing the cause of its own motion and extravagancy; so it happened to the shepherds, whose hearts being filled with the oil of gladness up unto the brim, the joy ran over, as being too big to be confined in their own breasts, and did communicate itself, growing greater by such dissemination. For " when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying, which was told them concerning this child. And," as well they might, " all that heard it, wondered." But Mary, having first changed her joy into wonder, turned her wonder into entertainments of the mystery, and the mystery into a fruition and cohabitation with it: For " Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart." And the shepherds having seen what the angels did upon the publication of the news, which less concerned them than us, had learnt their duty, to sing an honour to God for the nativity of Christ: for " the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things, that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

8. But the angels had told the shepherds, that the nativity was " glad tidings of great joy unto all people;" and, that " the heavens might declare the glory of God, and the firmament show his handy work;" this also was told abroad, even to the Gentiles, by a sign from heaven, by the message of a star. For there was a prophecy of Balaam, famous in all the eastern country, and recorded by Moses[s], " There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel: Out of Jacob shall come he, that shall have dominion." Which although in its first sense it signified David, who was

[s] Num. xxiv. 17.

the conqueror of the Moabites; yet, in its more mysterious and chiefly intended sense, it related to the Son of David. And, in expectation of the event of this prophecy[h], the Arabians, the sons of Abraham by Keturah, whose portion given by their patriarch was gold, frankincense, and myrrh, who were great lovers of astronomy, did with diligence expect the revelation of a mighty prince in Judæa at such time, when a miraculous and extraordinary star should appear. And therefore, "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men," inspired by God, taught by art, and persuaded by prophecy, "from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him." The Greeks suppose this, which was called a star, to have been indeed an angel in a pillar of fire, and the semblance of a star; and it is made the more likely, by coming and standing directly over the humble roof of his nativity, which is not discernible in the station of a star, though it be supposed to be lower than the orb of the moon. To which, if we add, that they only saw it, (so far as we know,) and that it appeared, as it were, by voluntary periods, it will not be very improbable, but that it might be like the angel, that went before the sons of Israel in a pillar of fire by night; or rather, like the little shining stars sitting upon the bodies of Probus, Tharacus, and Andronicus, martyrs, when their bodies were searched for, in the days of Dioclesian, and pointed at by those bright angels.

9. This star did not trouble Herod, till the Levantine princes expounded the mysteriousness of it, and said it declared a "king to be born in Jewry," and that the star was his, not applicable to any signification but of a king's birth. And therefore, although it was no prodigy nor comet[i], foretelling diseases, plagues, war, and death, but only the happy birth of a most excellent prince; yet it brought affrightment to Herod and all Jerusalem: for "when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." And thinking that the question of the kingdom was now in dispute, and an heir sent from

[h] Epiphan. in Expos. Fid. Cath. c. 8.

[i] Et terris mutantem regna cometem.—*Chalcidius in Timæum Platonis.*

heaven to lay challenge to it, who brought a star and the learning of the East with him, for evidence and probation of his title, Herod thought there was no security to his usurped possession, unless he could rescind the decrees of Heaven, and reverse the results and eternal counsels of predestination. And he was resolved to venture it, first by craft, and then by violence.

10. And first, "he calls the chief priests and scribes of the people together, and demanded of them, where Christ should be born;" and found, by their joint determination, that Bethlehem of Judæa was the place, designed by ancient prophecy and God's decree. Next, he inquired of the wise men concerning the star, but privily, what time it appeared. For the star had not motion certain and regular[k], by the laws of nature; but it so guided the wise men in their journey, that it stood when they stood, moved not when they rested, and went forward when they were able, making no more haste than they did, who carried much of the business and employment of the star along with them. But when Herod was satisfied in his questions, "he sent them to Bethlehem," with instructions "to search diligently for the young child, and to bring him word," pretending that he would "come and worship him also."

11. The wise men prosecuted the business of their journey, and "having heard the king, they departed; and the star," (which, as it seems, attended their motion,) "went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was;" where "when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Such a joy as is usual to wearied travellers, when they are entering into their inn; such a joy as when our hopes and greatest longings are laying hold upon the proper objects of their desires, a joy of certainty immediately before the possession: for that is the greatest joy, which possesses before it is satisfied, and rejoices with a joy not abated by the surfeits of possession, but heightened with all the apprehensions and fancies of hope, and the neighbourhood of fruition; a joy of nature, of wonder, and of religion. And now their hearts laboured with a throng of spirits and passions, and ran into the house, to the

[k] Leo Serm. 4. de Epiphan.

embracement of Jesus, even before their feet: but "when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child, with Mary his mother." And possibly their expectation was something lessened, and their wonder heightened, when they saw their hope empty of pomp and gaiety, the great King's throne to be a manger, a stable to his chamber of presence, a thin court, and no ministers, and the King himself a pretty babe; and, but that he had a star over his head, nothing to distinguish him from the common condition of children, or to excuse him from the miseries of a poor and empty fortune.

12. This did not scandalize those wise persons; but, being convinced by that testimony from Heaven, and the union of all circumstances, "they fell down and worshipped him," after the manner of the Easterlings, when they do veneration to their kings; not with an empty Ave, and gay blessing of fine words, but "they bring presents, and come into his courts;" for "when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh." And if these gifts were mysterious[l], beyond the acknowledgment of him to be the King of the Jews, and Christ, that should come into the world; frankincense might signify him to be acknowledged a God, myrrh to be a man, and gold to be a king: unless we choose by gold to signify the acts of mercy; by myrrh, the chastity of minds and purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is especially instrumental; and by incense we intend our prayers[m], as the most apt presents and oblations to the honour and service of this young King. But however the fancies of religion may represent variety of ideas, the act of adoration was direct and religious, and the myrrh was medicinal to his tender body; the incense possibly no more than was necessary in a stable, the first throne of his humility; and the gold was a good antidote against the present indigencies of his poverty: presents such as were used in all the Levant, (especially in Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frankincense were proper,) in their addresses to their God and to their king; and were instruments with

[l] S. Ambros. in ii. Lu. 6. Leo, Ser. de Epiph. Theophil. in Matt. ii. S. Bernard. in Serm. 2. de Epiph.

[m] Phil. iv. 18. Ps. cxli. 2. Rev. v. 8.

which, under the veil of flesh, they worshipped the eternal Word; the wisdom of God, under infant innocency; the almighty power, in so great weakness; and under the lowness of human nature, the altitude of majesty and the infinity of divine glory. And so was verified the prediction of the prophet Esay[n], under the type of the son of the propheteess, "Before a child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, he shall take the spoil of Damascus and Samaria from before the king of Assyria."

13. When they had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, "being warned in their sleep by an angel, not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way;" where, having been satisfied with the pleasures of religion, and taught by that rare demonstration which was made by Christ, how man's happiness did nothing at all consist in the affluence of worldly possessions, or the tumours of honour; having seen the eternal Son of God poor and weak, and unclothed of all exterior ornaments; they renounced the world, and retired empty into the recesses of religion, and the delights of philosophy.

Ad SECTION IV.

Considerations upon the Apparition of the Angels to the Shepherds.

1. When the angels saw that come to pass, which Gabriel, the great ambassador of God, had declared; that which had been prayed for and expected four thousand years; and that, by the merits of this new-born Prince, their younger brethren and inferiors in the order of intelligent creatures were now to be redeemed, that men should partake the glories of their secret habitations, and should fill up those void places, which the fall of Lucifer and the third part of the stars had made, their joy was as great as their understanding; and these mountains did leap with joy, because the vallies were filled with benediction, and a fruitful shower from heaven. And if, at the conversion of one sinner, there

[n] Isa. viii. 4. Justin M. Dial. cum Tryphon. Tertul. lib. iii. contra Marcion. c. 13.

is jubilation, and a festival kept among the angels, how great shall we imagine this rejoicing to be, when salvation and redemption was sent to all the world! But we also, to whom the joy did more personally relate, (for they rejoiced for our sakes,) should learn to estimate the grace done us, and believe there is something very extraordinary in the piety and salvation of a man, when the angels, who in respect of us are unconcerned in the communications, rejoice with the joy of conquerors, or persons suddenly ransomed from tortures and death.

2. But the angels also had other motions: for besides the pleasures of that joy, which they had in beholding human nature so highly exalted, and that God was man, and man was God; they were transported with admiration at the ineffable counsel of God's predestination, prostrating themselves with adoration and modesty, seeing God so humbled, and man so changed, and so full of charity, that God stooped to the condition of man, and man was inflamed beyond the love of seraphim, and was made more knowing than cherubim, more established than thrones, more happy than all the orders of angels. The issue of this consideration teaches us to learn their charity, and to exterminate all the intimations and beginnings of envy, that we may as much rejoice at the good of others as of ourselves: for then we love good for God's sake, when we love good, wherever God hath placed it: and that joy is charitable, which overflows our neighbours' fields, when ourselves are unconcerned in the personal accruments; for so we are "made partakers of all that fear God," when charity unites their joy to ours, as it makes us partakers of their common sufferings.

3. And now the angels, who had adored the holy Jesus in heaven, come also to pay their homage to him upon earth; and laying aside their flaming swords, they take into their hands instruments of music, and sing, "Glory be to God on high." First signifying to us, that the incarnation of the holy Jesus was a very great instrument of the glorification of God; and those divine perfections, in which he is chiefly pleased to communicate himself to us, were in nothing manifested so much as in the mysteriousness of this work. Secondly: And in vain doth man satisfy himself with complacencies and ambitious designs upon earth, when he sees

before him God in the form of a servant, humble, and poor, and crying, and an infant full of need and weakness.

4. But God hath pleased to reconcile his glory with our eternal benefit; and that also was part of the angels' song, "In earth, peace to men of good will." For now we need not, with Adam, to fly from the presence of the Lord, saying, "I heard thy voice, and I was afraid, and hid myself;" for he, from whom our sins made us once to fly, now weeps, and is an infant in his mother's arms, seeking strange means to be reconciled to us; hath forgotten all his anger, and is swallowed up with love, and encircled with irradiations of amorous affections and good will: and the effects of this good will are not referred only to persons of heroical and eminent graces and operations, of vast and expensive charities, of prodigious abstinencies, of eremitical retirements, of ascetical diet, of perfect religion, and canonized persons; but to all "men of good will," whose souls are hallowed with holy purposes and pious desires, though the beauties of the religion and holy thoughts were not spent in exterior acts, nor called out by the opportunities of a rich and expressive fortune.

5. But here we know, where the seat and regiment of peace is placed, and all of it must pass by us and descend upon us, as duty and reward. It proceeds from the Word incarnate, from the Son of God, undertaking to reconcile us to his Father; and it is ministered and consigned unto us by every event and act of Providence, whether it be deciphered in characters of paternal indulgence, or of correction, or absolution. For that is not peace from above, to have all things according to our human and natural wishes; but to be in favour with God, that is peace; always remembering, that to be chastised by him is not a certain testimony of his mere wrath, but to all his servants a character of love and of paternal provision, since "he chastises every son, whom he receives." Whosoever seeks to avoid all this world's adversity, can never find peace; but he only who hath resolved all his affections, and placed them in the heart of God; he who denies his own will, and hath killed self-love, and all those enemies within, that make afflictions to become miseries indeed, and full of bitterness; he only enjoys this peace: and in proportion to every man's mortification and self-

denial, so are the degrees of his peace. And this is the peace, which the angel proclaimed at the enunciation of that birth, which taught humility, and contempt of things below, and all their vainer glories, by the greatest argument in the world, even the poverty of God incarnate. And if God sent his own, natural, only-begotten, and beloved Son, in all the dresses of poverty and contempt; that person is vain, who thinks God will love him better, than he loved his own Son, or that he will express his love any other or gentler way, than to make him partaker of the fortune of his eldest Son. There is one other postern to the dwellings of peace, and that is, "good will to men;" for so much charity as we have to others, such a measure of peace also we may enjoy at home: for peace was only proclaimed to "men of good will," to them that are at peace with God and all the world.

6. But the angel brought the message to shepherds, to persons simple, and mean, and humble; persons likely to be more apprehensive of the mystery, and less of the scandal, of the poverty of the Messias: for they whose custom or affections dwell in secular pomps, who are not used by charity or humility to stoop to an evenness and consideration of their brethren of equal natures, though of unequal fortunes, are persons, of all the world, most indisposed and removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, especially when they do not come clothed with advantages of the world, and of such beauties which they admire. God himself in poverty, comes in a prejudice to them that love riches, and simplicity is folly to crafty persons[a]; a mean birth is an ignoble stain, beggary is a scandal, and the cross an unanswerable objection. But the angel's moral in the circumstance of his address, and inviting the poor shepherds to Bethlehem, is, that none are fit to come to Christ but those, who are poor in spirit, despisers of the world, simple in

[a] At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus, atque
Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare. Probus quis
Nobiscum vivit? multùm est demissus homo. Illi
Tardo, cognomen pingui damus ———
Simplicior quis——ut fortè legentem
Aut tacitum impellat quovis sermone? molestus!
Communi sensu planè caret, inquimus.
Horat. Serm. l. i. *Sat.* 3. 65.

their hearts, without craft and secular designs; and therefore neither did the angel tell the story to Herod, nor to the scribes and pharisees, whose ambition had ends contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of Jesus.

7. These shepherds, when they conversed with angels, were "watching over their flocks by night;" no revellers, but in a painful and dangerous employment, the work of an honest calling, securing their folds against incursions of wild beasts, which in those countries are not seldom or unfrequent. And Christ being the great Shepherd, (and possibly, for the analogy's sake, the sooner manifested to shepherds,) hath made his ministers overseers of their flocks, distinguished in their particular folds, and conveys the mysteriousness of his kingdom, first to the pastors, and by their ministry, to the flocks. But although all of them be admitted to the ministry, yet those only to the interior recesses and nearer imitations of Jesus, who are watchful over their flocks, assiduous in their labours, painful in their sufferings, present in the dangers of the sheep, ready to interpose their persons and sacrifice their lives; these are shepherds, who first converse with angels, and finally shall enter into the presence of the Lord. But, besides this symbol, we are taught in the significations of the letter, that he that is diligent in the business of an honest calling, is then doing service to God; and a work so pleasing to him, who hath appointed the sons of men to labour, that to these shepherds he made a return and recompence, by the conversation of an angel; and hath advanced the reputation of an honest and a mean employment to such a testimony of acceptance, that no honest person, though busied in meaner offices, may ever hereafter, in the estimation of Christ's disciples, become contemptible.

8. The signs, which the angel gave to discover the babe, were no marks of lustre and vanity; but they should find, 1. a babe, 2. swaddled, 3. lying in a manger: the first a testimony of his humility; the second, of his poverty; the third, of his incommodity and uneasiness; for Christ came to combat the whole body of sin, and to destroy every province of Satan's kingdom; for these are direct antinomies to "the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Against the first, Christ opposed his hard and uneasy lodging; against the second, the poorness of his swaddling-

bands and mantle; and the third is combated by the great dignation and descent of Christ, from a throne of majesty to the state of a sucking babe. And these are the first lessons he hath taught us for our imitation; which that we may the better do, as we must take him for our pattern, so also for our helper, and pray to the holy Child, and he will not only teach us, but also give us power and ability.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesu, at whose birth the quires of angels sang praises to God, and proclaimed peace to men, sanctify my will and inferior affections; make me to be within the conditions of peace, that I be holy and mortified, a despiser of the world and exterior vanities, humble and charitable; that by thy eminent example I may be so fixed in the designs and prosecution of the ends of God and a blissful eternity, that I be unmoved with the terrors of the world, unaltered with its allurements and seductions, not ambitious of its honour, not desirous of its fulness and plenty; but make me diligent in the employment thou givest me, faithful in discharge of my trust, modest in my desires, content in the issues of thy providence; that in such dispositions I may receive and entertain visitations from heaven, and revelations of the mysteries and blisses evangelical; that by such directions I may be brought into thy presence, there to see thy beauties and admire thy graces, and imitate all thy imitable excellencies, and rest in thee for ever; in this world, by the perseverance of a holy and comfortable life, and in the world to come, in the participation of thy essential glories and felicities, O blessed and eternal Jesus!

Considerations of the Epiphany of the Blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi.

1. God, who is the universal Father of all men, at the nativity of the Messias gave notice of it to all the world, as they were represented by the grand division of Jews and Gentiles; to the Jewish shepherds by an angel, to the

Eastern magi by a star. For the Gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined within the limits of a national prerogative, but catholic and diffused. As God's love was, so was the dispensation of it, " without respect of persons :" for all, being included under the curse of sin, were to him equal and indifferent, undistinguishable objects of mercy. And Jesus, descended of the Jews, was also " the expectation of the Gentiles," and therefore communicated to all: the grace of God being like the air we breathe; and " it hath appeared to all men[a]," saith St. Paul; but the conveyances and communications of it were different, in the degrees of clarity and illustration. The angel told the shepherds the story of the nativity plainly and literally: the star invited the wise men by its rareness and preternatural apparition; to which also, as by a footpath, they had been led by the prophecy of Balaam.

2. But here first the grace of God prevents us; without him we can do nothing; he lays the first stone in every spiritual building, and then expects, by that strength he first gave us, that we make the superstructures. But as a stone, thrown into a river, first moves the water, and disturbs its surface into a circle, and then its own force wafts the neighbouring drops into a larger figure by its proper weight; so is the grace of God the first principle of our spiritual motion; and when it moves us into its own figure, and hath actuated and ennobled our natural powers by the influence of that first incentive, we continue the motion, and enlarge the progress. But as the circle on the face of the waters grows weaker, till it hath smoothed itself into a natural and even current, unless the force be renewed or continued; so does all our natural endeavour, when first set a-work by God's preventing grace, decline to the imperfection of its own kind, unless the same force be made energetical and operative, by the continuation and renewing of the same supernatural influence.

3. And therefore the Eastern magi, being first raised up into wonder and curiosity by the apparition of the star, were very far from finding Jesus by such general and indefinite significations; but then the goodness of God's grace increased its own influence; for an inspiration from the Spirit

[a] Tit. ii. 11.

of God admonished them to observe the star, showed the star, that they might find it, taught them to acknowledge it[b], instructed them to understand its purpose, and invited them to follow it, and never left them till they had found the holy Jesus. Thus also God deals with us. He gives us the first grace, and adds the second; he enlightens our understandings, and actuates our faculties, and sweetly allures us by the proposition of rewards, and wounds us with the arrows of his love, and inflames us with fire from heaven; ever giving us new assistances, or increasing the old, refreshing us with comforts, or arming us with patience; sometimes stirring our affections by the lights held out to our understanding, sometimes bringing confirmation to our understanding by the motion of our affections, till, by variety of means, we at last arrive at Bethlehem, in the service and entertainments of the holy Jesus; which we shall certainly do, if we follow the invitations of grace and exterior assistances, which are given us to instruct us, to help us, and to invite us, but not to force our endeavours and co-operations.

4. As it was an unsearchable wisdom, so it was an unmeasurable grace of providence and dispensation, which God did exhibit to the wise men; to them, as to all men, disposing the ministries of his grace sweetly, and by proportion to the capacities of the person suscipient. For God called the Gentiles by such means, which their customs and learning had made prompt and easy. For these magi were great philosophers and astronomers, and therefore God sent a miraculous star, to invite and lead them to a new and more glorious light, the lights of grace and glory. And God so blessed them in following the star, to which their innocent curiosity and national customs were apt to lead them, that their custom was changed to grace, and their learning heightened with inspiration; and God crowned all with a spiritual and glorious event. It was not much unlike, which God did to the princes and diviners among the Philistines, who sent the ark back with five golden emrods and five golden mice; an act proportionable to the custom and sense of their nation and religion: yet God accepted their opinion

[b] Dedit intellectum qui præstitit signum.—*S. Leo, Ser.* 1. *de Epiph.*

and divination to the utmost end they designed it, and took the plagues of emrods and mice from them. For oftentimes the custom or the philosophy of the opinions of a nation are made instrumental, through God's acceptance, to ends higher than they can produce by their own energy and intendment. And thus the astrological divinations of the magi were turned into the order of a greater design than the whole art could promise, their employment being altered into grace, and nature into a miracle. But then, when the wise men were brought by this means, and had seen Jesus, then God takes ways more immediate and proportionable to the kingdom of grace; the next time, God speaks to them by an angel. For so is God's usual manner, to bring us to him; first, by ways agreeable to us; and then to increase, by ways agreeable to himself. And when he hath furnished us with new capacities, he gives new lights, in order to more perfect employments: and, "To him that hath, shall be given full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over;" the eternal kindness of God being like the sea, which delights to run in its old channel, and to fill the hollownesses of the earth, which itself hath made, and hath once watered.

5. This star, which conducted the wise men to Bethlehem, (if, at least, it was properly a star, and not an angel,) was set in its place to be seen by all; but was not observed, or not understood, nor its message obeyed, by any but the three wise men: And indeed no man hath cause to complain of God, as if ever he would be deficient in assistances necessary to his service; but first the grace of God separates us from the common condition of incapacity and indisposition, and then we separate ourselves one from another by the use or neglect of this grace; and God doing his part to us, hath cause to complain of us, who neglect that which is our portion of the work. And, however even the issues and the kindnesses of God's predestination and antecedent mercy do very much toward the making the grace to be effective of its purpose, yet the manner of all those influences and operations being moral, persuasive, reasonable, and divisible, by concourse of various circumstances, the cause and the effect are brought nearer and nearer, in various

suscipients; but not brought so close together, but that God expects us to do something towards it[c]; so that we may say, with St. Paul, "It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me." And at the same time, when, by reason of our co-operation, we actuate and improve God's grace, and become distinguished from other persons more negligent under the same opportunities, God is he who also does distinguish us by the proportions and circumstantiate applications of his grace to every singular capacity; that we may be careful not to neglect the grace, and yet to return the entire glory to God[d].

6. Although God, to second the generous design of these wise personages in their inquiry of the new prince, made the star to guide them through the difficulties of their journey; yet when they came to Jerusalem, the star disappeared; God so resolving to try their faith, and the activity of their desires; to remonstrate to them that God is the Lord of all his creatures, and a voluntary dispenser of his own favours, and can as well take them away as indulge them; and to engage them upon the use of ordinary means and ministries, when they are to be had: for now the extraordinary and miraculous guide for a time did cease; that they, being at Jerusalem, might inquire of them, whose office and profession of sacred mysteries did oblige them to publish the Messias. For God is so great a lover of order[e], so regular and certain an exactor of us to use those ordinary ministries of his own appointing, that he, having used the extraordinary but as architects do frames of wood, to support the arches till they be built, takes them away when the work is ready, and leaves us to those other of his designation; and hath given such efficacy to these, that they are as persuasive and operative as a miracle; and St. Paul's sermon would convert as many, as if Moses should rise from the grave. And now the doctrines of Christianity have not only the same truth, but the same evidence and virtue also, they had in the midst

[c] ——————— Ἀλλ' ὅταν
Σπεύδῃ τις, αὐτὸς χἠ θεὸς συνάπτεται.
Ὡς τοῖς ξανοῦσι χρήματ' οὐδὲν ἀφελεῖ.—*Æschyl. Persæ.* 847. *Blomf.*

[d] Θεοῦ δὲ δῶρόν ἐστιν εὐτυχεῖν βροτούς.—*Æschyl.* ἐπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβ.—691.

[e] Τοῦτο γάς ἐστιν αὐτῇ καὶ τὸ εἶναι σοφία, τὸ ἐν τάξει καὶ τελειότητι πεφάγειν τὸν πάντων· ὥστε συμεῖναι ἀλλήλαις σοφίαν, καὶ τάξιν, καὶ τελειότητα.—*Hierocl. Needh.* p. 18.

of those prime demonstrations, extraordinary by miracle and prophecy, if men were equally disposed.

7. When they were come to the doctors of the Jews, they asked confidently, and with great openness, under the ear and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and so gave evidence of their faith, of their magnanimity, and fearless confidence and profession of it, and of their love of the mystery and object, in pursuance of which they had taken so troublesome and vexatious journies: and besides that they upbraided the tepidity and infidel baseness of the Jewish nation, who stood unmoved and unconcerned by all the circumstances of wonder, and stirred not one step to make inquiry after, or to visit the new-born King; they also teach us to be open and confident in our religion and faith, and not to consider our temporal, when they once come to contest against our religious interests.

8. The doctors of the Jews told the wise men, where Christ was to be born; the magi, they address themselves with haste to see him and to worship, and the doctors themselves stir not; God not only serving himself with truth, out of the mouths of impious persons, but magnifying the recesses of his counsel, and wisdom, and predestination; who uses the same doctrine to glorify himself and to confound his enemies, to save the scholars, and to condemn the tutors, to instruct one, and upbraid the other; making it an instrument of faith, and a conviction of infidelity: the sermons of the doctors, in such cases, being like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silk-worms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasions of their own nakedness, and the causes of their death. But as it is a demonstration of the Divine wisdom, so it is of human folly; there being no greater imprudence in the world, than to do others' advantage, and to neglect our own[f]. If thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee: but if thou be like a channel in a garden, through which the water runs to cool and moisten the herbs, but nothing for its own use; thou buildest a fortune to them upon the ruins of thine own house, while, "after thy preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a cast-away."

[f] Piaga mortale che si non può guarire,
Vivere in altrui, et in se stesso morire.

9. When the wise men departed from Jerusalem, the star again appeared, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy; and, indeed, to new converts and persons in their first addresses to the worship of God, such spiritual and exterior comforts are often indulged; because then God judges them to be most necessary, as being invitations to duty by the entertainments of our affections with such sweetnesses, which represent the glory of the reward, by the antepasts and refreshments dispensed even in the ruggedness of the way, and incommodities of the journey. All other delights are the pleasures of beasts, or the sports of children; these are the antepasts, and preventions of the full feasts and overflowings of eternity.

10. When they came to Bethlehem, and the star pointed them to a stable, they entered in; and being enlightened with a Divine ray, proceeding from the face of the holy Child, and seeing through the cloud, and passing through the scandal of his mean lodging and poor condition, they bowed themselves to the earth; first giving themselves an oblation to this great King, then they made offering of their gifts; for a man's person is first accepted, then his gift. God first regarded Abel, and then accepted his offering: which we are best taught to understand by the present instance; for it means no more, but that all outward services and oblations are made acceptable by the prior presentation of an inward sacrifice. If we have first presented ourselves, then our gift is pleasant, as coming but to express the truth of the first sacrifice; but if our persons be not first made a holocaust to God, the lesser oblations of outward presents are like sacrifices without salt and fire, nothing to make them pleasant or religious. For all other senses of this proposition charge upon God the distinguishing and acceptation of persons, against which he solemnly protests: God regards no man's person, but according to the doing of his duty; but then God is said first to accept the person, and then the gift, when the person is first sanctified and given to God by the vows and habits of a holy life; and then all the actions of his religion are homogeneal to their principle, and accepted by the acceptation of the man.

11. These magi presented to the holy Babe, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, protesting their faith of three articles by

the symbolical oblation: by gold, that he was a king; by incense, that he was a God; by myrrh, that he was a man. And the presents also were representative of interior virtues: the myrrh signifying faith, mortification, chastity, compunction, and all the actions of the purgative way of spiritual life; the incense signifying hope, prayer, obedience, good intention, and all the actions and devotions of the illuminative; the giving the gold representing love to God and our neighbours, the contempt of riches, poverty of spirit, and all the eminences and spiritual riches of the unitive life. And these oblations if we present to the holy Jesus, both our persons and our gifts shall be accepted, our sins shall be purged, our understandings enlightened, and our wills united to this holy Child, and entitled to a communion of all his glories.

12. And thus, in one view and two instances, God hath drawn all the world to himself by his son Jesus, in the instance of the shepherds and the Arabian magi, Jews and Gentiles, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; that in him all nations, and all conditions, and all families, and all persons, might be blessed[s]; having called all by one star or other, by natural reason, or by the secrets of philosophy; by the revelations of the Gospel, or by the ministry of angels; by the illuminations of the Spirit, or by the sermons and dictates of spiritual fathers; and hath consigned this lesson to us, that we must never appear before the Lord empty, offering gifts to him, by the expenses or by the affections of charity; either the worshipping or the oblations of religion, either the riches of the world or the love of the soul: for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Arabians, we may, with the poor shepherds, come and "kiss the Son, lest he be angry;" and in all cases come and "serve him with fear and reverence," and spiritual rejoicings.

[s] Nam simul terris animisque duri,
Et sua Bessi nive duriores,
Nunc oves facti, duce te, gregantur
Pacis in aulam.
Nox ubi quondam fuerat ferarum,
Nunc ibi ritus viget angelorum,
Et latet Justus quibus ipse latro
Vixit in antris.
S. Paulinus in Reditu Niceæ.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy Jesu, thou art the glory of thy people Israel, and a light to the Gentiles, and wert pleased to call the Gentiles to the adoration and knowledge of thy sacred person and laws, communicating the inestimable riches of thy holy discipline to all, with an universal undistinguishing love; give unto us spirits docible, pious, prudent, and ductile, that no motion or invitation of grace be ineffectual, but may produce excellent effects upon us, and the secret whispers of thy spirit may prevail upon our affections, in order to piety and obedience, as certainly as the loudest and most clamorous sermons of the Gospel. Create in us such excellences, as are fit to be presented to thy glorious Majesty; accept of the oblation of myself, and my entire services: but be thou pleased to verify my offering, and secure the possession to thyself, that the enemy may not pollute the sacrifice, or divide the gift, or question the title; but that I may be wholly thine, and for ever, clarify my understanding, sanctify my will, replenish my memory with arguments of piety; then shall I present to thee an oblation rich and precious, as the treble gift of the Levantine princes. Lord, I am thine, reject me not from thy favour, exclude me not from thy presence; then shall I serve thee all the days of my life, and partake of the glories of thy kingdom, in which thou reignest gloriously and eternally. Amen.

SECTION V.

Of the Circumcision of Jesus, and his Presentation in the Temple.

1. And now the blessed Saviour of the world began to do the work of his mission and our redemption: and because man had prevaricated all the Divine commandments, to which all human nature respectively to the persons of several capacities was obliged, and therefore the whole nature was

obnoxious to the just rewards of its demerits; first, Christ was to put that nature he had assumed, into a savable condition, by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually, by suffering the just deservings of its prevarications. He therefore addresses himself to all the parts of an active obedience; "and when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child," he exposed his tender body to the sharpness of the circumcising stone, and shed his blood in drops, giving an earnest of those rivers, which he did afterwards pour out for the cleansing all human nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God.

2. He that had no sin, nor was conceived by natural generation, could have no adherences to his soul or body, which needed to be pared away by a rite, and cleansed by a mystery; neither, indeed, do we find it expressed, that circumcision[a] was ordained for abolition or pardon of original sin, (it is indeed presumed so;) but it was instituted to be a seal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and Abraham's posterity, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," and therefore was not improper for him to suffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the Prince of the covenant, and "the Author and Finisher of that faith," which was consigned to Abraham in circumcision. But so mysterious were all the actions of Jesus, that this one served many ends. For, 1. It gave demonstration of the verity of human nature. 2. So he began to fulfil the law. 3. And took from himself the scandal of uncircumcision, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews against his entertainment and communion. 4. And then he took upon him that name, which declared him to be the Saviour of the world; which, as it was consummate in the blood of the cross, so was it inaugurated in the blood of circumcision: for "when the eight days were accomplished for circumcising of the Child, his name was called Jesus."

3. But this holy family, who had laid up their joys in the eyes and heart of God, longed, till they might be permitted an address to the temple, that there they might present the holy Babe unto his Father; and indeed that he, who had no

[a] Ὃς ποθ' ἑῆς πάτρης ἐξήγαγε δῖον Ἀβραὰμ,
Αὐτὸς ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν κελετ' ἀνέρα παντὶ σὺν οἴκῳ
Σάρκ' ἀποσυλῆσαι πόσθης ἄπο· καὶ ῥ' ἐτέλεσσεν.
Euseb. l. ix. c. 22. *Præpar. Evangel.*

other, might be brought to his own house. For although, while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was the Lord of the place: it was his Father's house, and he was "the Lord of all." And therefore, "when the days of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord," to whom he was holy, as being the first-born; the "first-born of his mother," the "only begotten Son of his Father," and "the first-born of every creature." And they "did with him according to the law of Moses, offering a pair of turtle doves" for his redemption.

4. But there was no public act about this holy Child, but it was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary. And, at this instant, the Spirit of God directed a holy person into the temple, that he might feel the fulfilling of a prophecy made to himself, that he might, before his death, "behold the Lord's Christ," and embrace "the glory and consolation of Israel, and the light of the Gentiles," in his arms: for old "Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God," and prophesied, and spake glorious things of that Child, and things sad and glorious concerning his mother; that the "child was set for the rising and falling of many in Israel, for a sign that should be spoken against;" and the bitterness of that contradiction should pierce the heart of the holy Virgin-mother like a sword, that her joy at the present accidents might be attempered with present revelation of her future trouble, and the excellent favour of being the mother of God might be crowned with the reward of martyrdom, and a mother's love be raised up to an excellency great enough to make her suffer the bitterness of being transfixed with his love and sorrow, as with a sword.

5. But old Anna, the prophetess, came also in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her long prayers and fasting in the temple: the long-looked-for redemption of Israel was now in the temple, and she saw with her eyes the Light of the World, the Heir of Heaven, the long-looked-for Messias, whom the nations had desired and expected, till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dim, with looking farther, and apprehending greater distances. She also pro-

phesied, " and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things, which were spoken of him."

Ad SECTION V.

Considerations upon the Circumcision of the holy Child Jesus.

1. WHEN eight days were come, the holy Jesus was circumcised, and shed the first fruits of his blood; offering them to God, like the prelibation of a sacrifice, and earnest of the great seas of effusion designed for his passion, not for the expiation of any stain himself had contracted; for he was spotless as the face of the sun, and had contracted no wrinkle from the aged and polluted brow of Adam: but it was an act of obedience, and yet of choice and voluntary susception, to which no obligation had passed upon him in the condition of his own person. For, as he was included in the verge of Abraham's posterity, and had put on the common outside of his nation, his parents had intimation enough to pass upon him the sacrament of the national covenant, and it became an act of excellent obedience: but because he was a person extraordinary, and exempt from the reasons of circumcision, and himself in person was to give period to the rite, therefore it was an act of choice in him, and in both the capacities becomes a precedent of duty to us; in the first, of obedience; in the second, of humility.

2. But it is considerable, that the holy Jesus, who might have pleaded his exemption, especially in a matter of pain and dishonour, yet chose that way, which was more severe and regular; so teaching us to be strict in our duties, and sparing in the rights of privilege and dispensation. We pretend every indisposition of body to excuse us from penal duties, from fasting, from going to church; and instantly we satisfy ourselves with saying, " God will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" so making ourselves judges of our own privileges, in which commonly we are parties against God, and therefore likely to pass unequal sentence. It is not an easy argument, that will bring us to the severities and rigours of duty; but we snatch at occasions of dispensation, and therefore possibly

may mistake the justice of the opportunities by the importunities of our desires. However, if this too much easiness be, in any case, excusable from sin, yet, in all cases, it is an argument of infirmity; and the regular observation of the commandment is the surer way to perfection. For not every inconvenience of body is fit to be pleaded against the inconvenience of losing spiritual advantages, but only such, which upon prudent account does intrench upon the laws of charity; or such, whose consequent is likely to be impediment of a duty in a greater degree of loss, than the present omission. For the spirit being in many perfections more eminent than the body, all spiritual improvements have the same proportions; so that, if we were just estimators of things, it ought not to be less than a great incommodity to the body, which we mean to prevent by the loss of a spiritual benefit, or the omission of a duty: he were very improvident, who would lose a finger for the good husbandry of saving a ducat; and it would be an unhandsome excuse from the duties of repentance, to pretend care of the body. The proportions and degrees of this are so nice, and of so difficult determination, that men are more apt to untie the girdle of discipline with the loose hands of dispensation and excuse, than to strain her too hard by the strictures and bindings of severity; but the error were the surer on this side.

3. The blessed Jesus refused not the signature of this bloody covenant, though it were the character of a sinner; and did sacramentally rescind the impure reliques of Adam, and the contractions of evil customs; which was the greatest descent of humility, that is imaginable, that he should put himself to pain to be reckoned amongst sinners, and to have their sacraments and their protestations, though his innocence was purer than the flames of cherubim. But we use arts to seem more righteous than we are, desiring rather to be accounted holy, than to be so; as thinking the vanity of reputation more useful to us, than the happiness of a remote and far distant eternity. But if (as it is said) circumcision was ordained, besides the signing of the covenant, to abolish the guilt of original sin, we are willing to confess that; it being no act of humiliation to confess a crime, that all the world is equally guilty of, that could not be avoided by our timeliest industry, and that serves us for so many ends in the

excuse and minoration of our actual impieties: so that, as Diogenes trampled upon Plato's pride with a greater fastuousness and humorous ostentation; so we do with original sin, declaim against it bitterly, to save the others harmless, and are free in the publication of this, that we may be instructed how to conceal the actual. The blessed Jesus had in him no principle of sin, original nor actual; and therefore this designation of his, in submitting himself to the bloody covenant of circumcision, which was a just express and sacramental abscission of it, was an act of glorious humility; yet our charging of ourselves so promptly with Adam's fault, whatever truth it may have in the strictness of theology, hath (forsitan) but an ill end in morality; and so I now consider it, without any reflection upon the precise question.

4. For though the fall of Adam lost to him all those supernatural assistances, which God put into our nature by way of grace; yet it is by accident, that we are more prone to many sins than we are to virtue. Adam's sin did discompose his understanding and affections; and every sin we do, does still make us more unreasonable, more violent, more sensual, more apt still to the multiplication of the same or the like actions: the first rebellion of the inferior faculties against the will and understanding, and every victory the flesh gets over the spirit, makes the inferior insolent, strong, tumultuous, domineering, and triumphant, upon the proportionable ruins of the spirit, blinding our reason and binding our will; and all these violations of our powers are increased by the perpetual ill customs, and false principles, and ridiculous guises of the world; which makes the later ages to be worse than the former[a], unless some other accident do intervene, to stop the ruin and declension of virtue; such as are God's judgments, the sending of prophets, new imposition of laws, messages from heaven, diviner institutions, such as in particular was the great discipline of Christianity. And even in this sense here is origination enough for sin, and impairing of the reasonable faculties of human souls, without charging our faults upon Adam.

5. But besides this, God, who hath propounded to man glorious conditions, and designed him to an excellent state

[a] Τοὺς παλαιοὺς καὶ ἐγγὺς θεῶν γεγονότας, βελτίστους τε ὄντας φύσει, καὶ τὸν ἄριστον ἐζηκότας βίον, ὡς χρυσοῦν γένος νομίζεσθαι.—*Porphyr.* lib. iv. *de non Esu Animalium.*

of immortality, hath required of him such a duty, as shall put man to labour, and present to God a service of a free and difficult obedience. For therefore God hath given us laws, which come cross and are restraints to our natural inclinations, that we may part with something in the service of God, which we value. For although this is nothing in respect of God, yet to man it is the greatest he can do. What thanks were it to man to obey God in such things, which he would do, though he were not commanded? But to leave all our own desires, and to take up objects of God's propounding, contrary to our own, and desires against our nature, this is that, which God designed as a sacrifice of ourselves to him. And, therefore, God hath made many of his laws to be prohibitions in the matter of natural pleasure, and restraints of our sensitive appetite. Now, this being become the matter of Divine laws, that we should, in many parts and degrees, abstain from what pleases our senses, by this supervening accident it happens, that we are very hardly weaned from sin, but most easily tempted to a vice. And then we think we have reason to lay the fault upon original sin, and natural aversation from goodness, when this inclination to vice is but accidental, and occasional upon the matter and sanction of the laws. Our nature is not contrary to virtue, for the laws of nature and right-reason do not only oblige us, but incline us to it[b]; but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross to our nature, that is, to our natural appetites; by reason of which it comes to pass, that (as St. Paul says) "we are by nature the children of wrath[c];" meaning, that, by our natural inclinations, we are disposed to contradict those laws which lay fetters upon them, we are apt to satisfy the lusts of the flesh; for in these he there instances.

6. But in things intellectual and spiritual, where neither the one nor the other satisfy the sensual part, we are indifferent to virtue or to vice; and, when we do amiss, it is, wholly, and in all degrees, inexcusably our own fault. In the old law, when it was a duty to swear by the God of Israel in solemn causes, men were apt enough to swear by him only;

[b] Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι ἐνοσιούμενος ὅρκος, μὴ παραβαίνειν ὑπ' αὐτῶν [Θεοῦ] διορισθέντας νόμους.—*Hieroc.*

[c] Ephes. ii. 3.

and that sometimes the Israelites did swear by the queen of Heaven, it was by the ill example and desires to comply with the neighbour nations, whose daughters they sometimes married, or whose arms they feared, or whose friendship they desired, or with whom they did negotiate. It is indifferent to us to love our fathers and to love strangers, according as we are determined by custom or education. Nay, for so much of it as is natural and original, we are more inclined to love them than to disrepute them; and if we disobey them, it is when any injunction of theirs comes cross to our natural desires and purposes. But if, from our infancy, we be told concerning a stranger, that he is our father, we frame our affections to nature, and our nature to custom and education, and are as apt to love him who is not, and yet is said to be, as him, who is said not to be, and yet indeed is, our natural father.

7. And in sensual things, if God had commanded polygamy or promiscuous concubinate, or unlimited eatings and drinkings, it is not to be supposed but that we should have been ready enough to have obeyed God in all such impositions: and the sons of Israel never murmured, when God bade them borrow jewels and ear-rings, and spoil the Egyptians. But because God restrained these desires, our duties are the harder, because they are fetters to our liberty, and contradictions to those natural inclinations, which also are made more active by evil custom and unhandsome educations. From which premises we shall observe, in order to practice, that sin creeps upon us in our education so tacitly and undiscernibly[d], that we mistake the cause of it, and yet so prevalently and effectually, that we judge it to be our very nature, and charge it upon Adam, to lessen the imputation upon us, or to increase the license or the confidence, when every one of us is the Adam, the "man of sin," and the parent of our own impurities. For it is notorious, that our own iniquities do so discompose our naturals, and evil customs and examples do so encourage impiety, and the law of God

[d] Non enim nos tarditatis natura damnavit, sed ultrà nobis quod oportebat indulsimus: ità non tam ingenio nos illi superârunt quàm proposito.—*Quintil.*

Ξενοκράτης φησὶν, ἐυδαίμονα ἶναι τὸν τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα σπουδαίαν, ταύτην γὰρ ἑκάστῳ ἶναι δαίμονα.—*Arist.* ii. *Top.* c. 3.

Ἡράκλειτος ἔφη, ὡς ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων.—*Stob. Serm.* 250.

enjoins such virtues, which do violence to nature, that our proclivity to sin is occasioned by the accident, and is caused by ourselves; whatever mischief Adam did to us, we do more to ourselves[e]. We are taught to be revengeful in our cradles, and are taught to strike our neighbour, as a means to still our frowardness, and to satisfy our wranglings. Our nurses teach us to know the greatness of our birth, or the riches of our inheritance; or they learn us to be proud, or to be impatient, before they learn us to know God, or to say our prayers. And then, because the use of reason comes at no definite time, but insensibly and divisibly, we are permitted such acts with impunity too long; deferring to repute them to be sins, till the habit is grown strong, natural, and masculine. And because from the infancy it began in inclinations, and tender overtures, and slighter actions, Adam is laid in the fault, and original sin did all: and this clearly we therefore confess[f], that our faults may seem the less, and the misery be pretended natural, that it may be thought to be irremediable, and therefore we not engaged to endeavour a cure; so that the confession of our original sin is no imitation of Christ's humility in suffering circumcision, but too often an act of pride, carelessness, ignorance, and security.

8. At the circumcision, his parents imposed the holy name told to the Virgin by the angel, "his name was called Jesus;" a name above every name. For, in old times, God was known by names of power, of nature, of majesty. But his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy by the mediation and ministry of his holy Son. And because God

[e] ——————————— Denique teipsum
Concute, num qua tibi vitiorum inseverit olim
Natura, aut etiam consuetudo mala: namque
Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris.—*Horat.* 1. s. iii. 37.

Antè palatum eorum quàm os instituimus. Gaudemus, si quid licentiùs dixerint. Verba ne Alexandrinis quidem permittenda deliciis risu et osculo excipimus. Fit ex his consuetudo, deinde natura. Discunt hæc miseri, antequam sciunt vitia esse.—*Quintil.* lib. i. c. 2.

Tanta est corruptela malæ consuetudinis, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur à natura dati, exorianturque et confirmentur contraria vitia.—*Cicero*, 3. T. Q. 2.

[f] Εἰώθασι γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὐχ ὅπως ἐπαινεῖν καὶ τιμᾶν τοὺς ἐκ τῶν πατέρων τῶν ἐνδαιμόνων γεγονότας, ὡς τοὺς ἐκ τῶν δυσκόλων καὶ χαλεπῶν, ὥσπερ φαίνονται μισθὸν ὄμοιον τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὄντες.—*Isocrates Ep. ad Timoth.* p. 746. ed. Lange.

gave to the holy Babe the name, in which the treasures of mercy were deposited, and exalted "this name above all names," we are taught that the purpose of his counsel was, to exalt and magnify his mercy above all his other works; he being delighted with this excellent demonstration of it, in the mission, and manifestation, and crucifixion, of his Son; he hath changed the ineffable name into a name utterable by man, and desirable by all the world; the majesty is all arrayed in robes of mercy, the tetragrammaton[g], or adorable mystery of the patriarchs, is made fit for pronunciation and expression, when it becometh the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God clothed with circumstances of facility, and opportunities of approximation. The great and highest name of God could not be pronounced truly, till it came to be finished with a guttural, that made up the name given by this angel to the holy Child; nor God received or entertained by men, till he was made human and sensible, by the adoption of a sensitive nature, like vowels pronunciable by the intertexture of a consonant. Thus was his person made tangible, and his name utterable, and his mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made explicate, at the circumcision of this holy Babe.

9. But now God's mercy was at full sea, now was the time when God made no reserves to the effusion of his mercy. For to the patriarchs, and persons of eminent sanctity and employment in the elder ages of the world, God, according to the degrees of his manifestation or present purpose, would give them one letter of this ineffable name. For the reward, that Abraham had in the change of his name, was, that he had the honour done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it; and so had Joshua, when he was a type of Christ, and the prince of the Israelitish armies: and when God took away[h] one of these letters, it was a curse. But

[g] Nomen enim Jesu Hebraicè prolatum nihil aliud est nisi Τετραγράμματον vocatum per Schin. Videat, cui animus est, multa de mysterio hujus nominis apud Galatinum. Ad eundem sensum fuit vaticinium Sibyllæ:

Δὴ τότε γὰρ μεγάλοιο Θεοῦ τοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν
Ἥξει σαρκοφόρος, θνητοῖς ὁμοιούμενος ἐν γῇ,
Τέσσαρα φαινόντα φέρων, τὸ δ' ἄφατον ἐν αὐτῷ.

[h] Isa. xxi. 11. in casu Idumeæ; Duma vocatur, dempto H.

now he communicated all the whole name to this holy Child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that he was the glory of God, "the express image of his Father's person," God eternal; and then manifested to the world in his humanity, that all the intelligent world, who expected beatitude, and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, might find them all, with ample returns, in this name of Jesus, which God "hath exalted above every name," even above that, by which God, in the Old Testament, did represent the greatest awfulness of his majesty. This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments, the nightly rites of sorcerers, the secrets of Memphis, the drugs of Thessaly, the silent and mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldees, and the spells of Zoroastres. This is the name, at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the Divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction: at the mention of this name, the blessed apostles, and Hermione, the daughter of St. Philip, and Philotheus, the son of Theophila, and St. Hilarion, and St. Paul the Eremite, and innumerable other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of Righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles: "Signs and wonders and healings were done by the name of the holy Child Jesus." This is the name, which we should engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love, with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion; it being that name, whereby God and God's mercies are made presential to us, and proportionate objects of our religion and affections.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy and ever-blessed Jesu, who art infinite in essence, glorious in mercy, mysterious in thy communications, affable and presential in the descents of thy humanity; I

adore thy glorious name, whereby thou hast shut up the abysses, and opened the gates of heaven, restraining the power of hell, and discovering and communicating the treasures of thy Father's mercies. O Jesu, be thou a Jesus unto me, and save me from the precipices and ruins of sin, from the expresses of thy Father's wrath, from the miseries and insufferable torments of accursed spirits, by the power of thy majesty, by the sweetnesses of thy mercy, and sacred influences and miraculous glories of thy name. I adore and worship thee in thy excellent obedience and humility, who hast submitted thy innocent and spotless flesh to the bloody covenant of circumcision. Teach me to practise so blessed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble, and obedient to thy sacred laws, severe and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and spirit, of circumcised heart and tongue; that what thou didst represent in symbol and mystery, I may really express in the exhibition of an exemplar, pious, and mortified life, cutting off all excrescences of my spirit, and whatsoever may minister to the flesh, or any of its ungodly desires; that now thy holy name is called upon me, I may do no dishonour to the name, nor scandal to the institution, but may do thee honour and worship, and adorations of a pure religion, O most holy and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE II.

Of the Virtue of Obedience.

1. THERE are certain excellencies, either of habit or consideration, which spiritual persons use to call general ways; being a dispersed influence into all the parts of good life, either directing the single actions to the right end, or managing them with right instruments, and adding special excellencies and formalities to them, or morally inviting to the repetition of them. But they are like the general medicaments in physic, or the prime instruments in mathematical disciplines: such as are the consideration of the Divine presence, the example of Jesus, right intention; and such also

is the virtue of obedience, which perfectly unites our actions to God, and conforms us to the Divine will, which is the original of goodness; and sanctifies and makes a man an holocaust to God, which contains in it eminently all other graces, but especially those graces, whose essence consists in a conformity of a part or the whole, (such are faith, humility, patience, and charity;) which gives quietness and tranquillity to the spirit, and is an antepast of Paradise, (where their jubilee is the perpetual joys of obedience, and their doing is the enjoying the Divine pleasure;) which adds an excellency and lustre to pious actions, and hallows them which are indifferent, and lifts up some actions from their unhallowed nature, to circumstances of good and of acceptation. If a man says his prayers, or communicates out of custom, or without intuition of the precept and Divine commandment, the act is like a ship returning from her voyage without her venture and her burden, as unprofitable as without stowage. But if God commands us either to eat or to abstain, to sleep or to be waking, to work or to keep a Sabbath; these actions, which are naturally neither good nor evil, are sanctified by the obedience, and ranked amongst actions of the greatest excellency. And this also was it which made Abraham's offer to kill his son, and the Israelites' spoiling the Egyptians, to become acts laudable, and not unjust: they were acts of obedience, and therefore had the same formality and essence with actions of the most spiritual devotions. God's command is all our rule for practice; and our obedience, united to the obedience of Jesus, is all our title to acceptance.

2. But by obedience, I do not here mean the exterior execution of the work; for so, obedience is no grace, distinct from the acting any or all the commandments: but besides the doing of the thing, (for that also must be presupposed,) it is a sacrifice of our proper will to God, a choosing the duty, because God commands it. For beasts also carry burdens, and do our commands by compulsion; and the fear of slaves, and the rigour of task-masters, made the number of bricks to be completed, when Israel groaned, and cried to God for help. But sons, that labour under the sweet paternal regiment of their fathers, and the influence of love, they love the precept, and do the imposition, with the same purposes and compliant affections, with which the fathers made it. When Christ

commanded us to renounce the world, there were some, that did think it was a hard saying, and do so still; and the young rich man forsook him upon it: but Ananias and Sapphira, upon whom some violences were done by custom, or the excellent sermons of the apostles, sold their possessions too; but it was so against their will, that they retained part of it. But St. Paul did not only forsake all his secular fortunes, but "counted all to be dross, that he might gain Christ;" he gave his will, made an offertory of that, as well as of his goods, choosing the act which was enjoined. This was the obedience the holy Jesus paid to his heavenly Father, so voluntary, that it was "meat to him to do his Father's will[a]."

3. And this was intended always by God, "My son, give me thy heart;" and particularly by the holy Jesus: for, in the saddest instance of all his precepts, even that of suffering persecution, we are commanded to "rejoice, and to be exceeding glad." And so did those holy martyrs, in the primitive ages, who, upon just grounds, when God's glory, or the edification of the church, had interest in it[b], they offered themselves to tyrants, and dared the violence of the most cruel and bowelless hangmen. And this is the best oblation we can present to God. "To offer gold[c], is a present fit to be made by young beginners in religion, not by men in Christianity; yea, Crates the Theban threw his gold away, and so did Antisthenes: but to offer our will to God, to give ourselves, is the act of an apostle, the proper act of Christians." And therefore, when the apostles made challenge of a reward for leaving all their possessions, Christ makes no reply to the instance, nor says, "You who have left all;" but, "You who have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel:" meaning, that the quitting the goods was nothing; but the obedience to Christ, that they followed Jesus in the regeneration, going themselves in pursuit of him, and giving themselves to him, that was it, which entitled them to a throne.

4. And this, therefore, God enjoins, that our offerings to him may be entire and complete; that we pay him a holo-

[a] John, iv. 34. [b] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Licin. Hispan.
[c] Idem in xix. Matth. 28.

caust; that we do his work without murmuring; and that his burden may become easy, when it is borne up by the wings of love and alacrity of spirit. For, in effect, this obedience of the will is, in true speaking and strict theology, nothing else but that charity, which gives excellency to alms, and energy to faith, and acceptance to all graces. But I shall reduce this to particular and more minute considerations.

5. First: We shall best know, that our will is in the obedience, by our prompt undertaking[d], by our cheerful managing, by our swift execution; for all degrees of delay are degrees of immorigerousness and unwillingness. And since time is extrinsical to the act, and alike to every part of it, nothing determines an action but the opportunity without, and the desires and willingness within. And therefore he, who deliberates beyond his first opportunity, and exterior determination and appointment of the act, brings fire and wood, but wants a lamb for the sacrifice; and unless he offer up his Isaac, his beloved will, he hath no ministry prepared for God's acceptance. He that does not repent to-day, puts it to the question, whether he will repent at all or no. He that defers restitution, when all the circumstances are fitted, is not yet resolved upon the duty. And when he does it, if he does it against his will, he does but do honorary penance with a paper upon his hat, and a taper in his hand; it may satisfy the law, but not satisfy his conscience; it neither pleases himself, and less pleases God. A sacrifice without a heart was a sad and ominous presage in the superstition of the Roman augurs, and so it is in the service of God; for what the exhibition of the work is to man, that the presentation of the will is to God. It is but a cold charity to a naked beggar to say, "God help thee," and do nothing; give him clothes, and he feels your charity. But God, who is the searcher of the heart, his apprehension of actions relative to him is of the inward motions and addresses of the will; and, without this, our exterior services are like the paying

[d] Fidelis obediens nescit moras, fugit crastinum, ignorat tarditatem, præcipit præcipientem, parat oculos visui, aures auditui, linguam voci, manus operi, itineri pedes: totum se colligit, ut imperantis colligat voluntatem.—*S. Bernard. Serm. de Obedient.*

Et barbaris cunctatio servilis, statim exsequi regium.—*Tacit.* lib. vi. *Annal.* 32.

of a piece of money, in which we have defaced the image; it is not current.

6. Secondly: But besides the willingness to do the acts of express command, the readiness to do the intimations and tacit significations of God's pleasure is the best testimony in the world, that our will is in the obedience. Thus did the holy Jesus undertake a nature of infirmity, and suffer a death of shame and sorrow, and became obedient from the circumcision even unto the death of the cross; not staying for a command, but because it was his Father's pleasure mankind should be redeemed. For, before the susception of it, he was not a person subjicible to a command: it was enough, that he understood the inclinations and designs of his Father's mercies. And therefore God hath furnished us with instances of uncommanded piety to be a touchstone of our obedience. He that does but his endeavour about the express commands, hath a bridle in his mouth, and is restrained by violence; but a willing spirit is like a greedy eye, devours all it sees, and hopes to make some proportionable returns and compensations of duty for his infirmity, by taking in the intimations of God's pleasure. When God commands chastity, he that undertakes a holy celibate, hath great obedience to the command of chastity. God bids us give alms of our increase; he obeys this with great facility, that "sells all his goods, and gives them to the poor." And, provided our hastiness to snatch at too much, does not make us let go our duty, like the indiscreet loads of too forward persons, too big, or too inconvenient and uncombined, there is not in the world a greater probation of our prompt obedience, than when we look farther than the precise duty, swallowing that and more with our ready and hopeful purposes; nothing being so able to do miracles as love, and yet nothing being so certainly accepted as love, though it could do nothing in productions and exterior ministries.

7. Thirdly: But God requires that our obedience should have another excellency to make it a becoming present to the Divine acceptance; our understanding must be sacrificed too, and become an ingredient of our obedience. We must also believe, that whatsoever God commands, is most fitting to be commanded, is most excellent in itself, and the best for us to do. The first gives our affections and desires to God, and

this also gives our reason, and is a perfection of obedience not communicable to the duties we owe to man. For God only is Lord of this faculty, and, being the fountain of all wisdom, therefore commands our understanding, because he alone can satisfy it. We are bound to obey human laws, but not bound to think the laws we live under, are the most prudent constitutions in the world. But God's commandments are not only "a lantern to our feet, and a light unto our paths," but a rule to our reason, and satisfaction to our understandings; as being the instruments of our address to God, and conveyances of his grace, and manuductions to eternity. And therefore St. John Climacus defines obedience to be "An unexamined and unquestioned motion, a voluntary death and sepulture of the will, a life without curiosity, a laying aside our own discretion in the midst of the riches of the most excellent understandings."

8. And certainly there is not in the world a greater strength against temptations, than is deposited in an obedient understanding; because that only can regularly produce the same affections, it admits of fewer degrees, and an unfrequent alteration. But the actions proceeding from the appetite, as it is determined by any other principle than a satisfied understanding, have their heightenings and their declensions, and their changes and mutations, according to a thousand accidents. Reason is more lasting than desire, and with fewer means to be tempted; but affections and motions of appetite, as they are procured by any thing, so may they expire by as great variety of causes. And therefore, to serve God by way of understanding, is surer, and in itself [unless it be by the accidental increase of degrees] greater, than to serve him upon the motion and principle of passions and desires; though this be fuller of comfort and pleasure than the other. When Lot lived amongst the impure Sodomites, where his righteous soul was in a continual agony, he had few exterior incentives to a pious life, nothing to enkindle the sensible flame of burning desires toward piety; but in the midst of all the discouragements of the world, nothing was left him but the way and precedency of a truly-informed reason and conscience. Just so is the way of those wise souls, who live in the midst of "a crooked and perverse generation:" where piety is out of countenance, where auste-

rity is ridiculous, religion under persecution, no examples to lead us on; there the understanding is left to be the guide, and it does the work the surest; for this makes the duty of many to be certain, regular, and chosen, constant, integral, and perpetual: but this way is like the life of an unmarried or a retired person, less of grief in it, and less of joy. But the way of serving God with the affections, and with the pleasures and entertainments of desires, is the way of the more passionate and imperfect, not in a man's power to choose or to procure; but comes by a thousand chances, meeting with a soft nature, credulous or weak, easy or ignorant, softened with fears, or invited by forward desires.

9. Those that did live amidst the fervours of the primitive charity, and were warmed by their fires, grew inflamed by contact and vicinity to such burning and shining lights. And they therefore grew to high degrees of piety, because then every man made judgment of his own actions by the proportions, which he saw before him, and believed all descents from those greater examples to be so many degrees from the rule. And he that lives in a college of devout persons, will compare his own actions with the devotion and customs of that society, and not with the remissness of persons he hears of in story, but what he sees and lives with. But if we live in an age of indevotion, we think ourselves well assoiled if we be warmer than their ice; every thing, which is above our example, being eminent and conspicuous, though it be but like the light of a glow-worm, or the sparkling of a diamond, yet, if it be in the midst of darkness, it is a goodly beauty. This I call the way of serving God by desires and affections: and this is altered by example, by public manners, by external works, by the assignment of offices, by designation of conventions for prayer, by periods and revolutions of times of duty, by hours and solemnities; so that a man shall owe his piety to these chances, which, although they are graces of God, and instruments of devotion, yet they are not always in our power; and therefore they are but accidental ministries of a good life, and the least constant or durable. But when the principle of our piety is a conformity of our understanding to God's laws; when we are instructed what to do, and therefore do it, because we are satisfied it is most excellent to obey God; this will support our piety

against objections, lead it on in despite of disadvantages: this chooses God with reason, and is not determined from without. And as it is in some degree necessary for all times, so it is the greatest security against the change of laws and princes, and religions and ages: when all the incentives of affection and exterior determinations of our piety shall cease, and perhaps all external offices, and "the daily sacrifice," and piety itself, shall fail from the face of the land; then the obedience, founded in the understanding, is the only lasting strength is left us to make retreat to, and to secure our conditions. Thus, from the composition of the will and affections with our exterior acts of obedience to God, our obedience is made willing, swift, and cheerful; but from the composition of the understanding, our obedience becomes strong, sincere, and persevering; and this is that which St. Paul calls "our reasonable service."

10. Fourthly: To which if we add, that our obedience be universal, we have all the qualifications, which make the duty to be pious and prudent. The meaning is, that we obey God in all his sanctions, though the matter be in common account small and inconsiderable, and give no indulgence to ourselves to recede from the rule, in any matter whatsoever. For the veriest minute of obedience is worth our attention, as being by God esteemed the trial of our obedience in a greater affair. "He that is unjust in a little, will be unjust in a greater[*]," said our blessed Saviour. And since to God all matter is alike, and no more accrues to him in an hecatomb than in a piece of gum, in an ascetic severity than in a secular life, God regards not the matter of a precept, but the obedience, which in all instances is the same; and he that will prevaricate, when the matter is trifling, and, by consequence, the temptations to it weak and impotent, and soon confuted, will think he may better be excused, when the temptations are violent and importunate; as it commonly happens in affairs of greater importance. He that will lie to save sixpence, will not stick at it, when a thousand pound is the purchase; and possibly there is more contempt and despite done to the divine authority, when we disobey it in such particulars, wherein the obedience is most easy, and the

[*] Luke, xvi. 10.

temptations less troublesome. I do not say there is more injustice or more malice in a small disobedience than in a greater; but there is either more contempt, or more negligence and dissolution of discipline, than in the other.

11. And it is no small temptation of the devil, soliciting of us not to be curious of scruples and grains, nor to disturb our peace for lighter disobediences; persuading us that something must be indulged to public manners, something to the civilities of society, something to nature, and to the approaches of our passions, and the motions of our first desires; but that "we be not over-righteous." And true it is, that sometimes such surreptions and smaller indecencies are therefore pardoned, and lessened almost to a nullity, because they dwell in the confines of things lawful and honest, and are not so notorious as to be separated from permissions by any public, certain, and universal cognizance; and therefore may pass upon a good man, sometimes without observation. But it is a temptation, when we think of neglecting them by a predetermined incuriousness, upon pretence they are small. But this must be reduced to more regular conclusions.

12. First: Although smaller disobediences, expressed in slight misbecoming actions, when they come by surprise and sudden invasion, are, through the mercies of God, dashed in the very approach, their bills of accusation are thrown out, and they are not esteemed as competent instruments of separation from God's love; yet when a smaller sin comes by design, and is acted with knowledge and deliberation, (for then it is properly an act of disobedience,) "malitia supplet defectum ætatis," the malice of the agent heightens the smallness of the act, and makes up the iniquity. To drink liberally once, and something more freely than the strict rules of Christian sobriety and temperance permit, is pardoned the easier, when without deliberation and by surprise the person was abused, who intended not to transgress a minute, but by little and little was mistaken in his proportions: but if a man by design shall estimate his draughts and his good fellowship, and shall resolve upon a little intemperance, thinking, because it is not very much, it is therefore none at all, that man hath mistaken himself into a crime; and although a little wound upon the finger is very curable, yet the smallest prick upon the heart is mortal: so is a design and purpose of the

smallest disobedience in its formality, as malicious and destructive, as in its matter it was pardonable and excusable.

13. Secondly: Although every lesser disobedience, when it comes singly, destroys not the love of God; (for, although it may lessen the habit, yet it takes not away its natural being, nor interrupts its acceptation, lest all the world should in all instants of time be in a damnable condition;) yet when these smaller obliquities are repeated, and no repentance intervenes, this repetition combines and unites the lesser, till they be concentred, and by their accumulation make a crime[f]: and therefore a careless reiterating, and an incurious walking in misbecoming actions, is deadly and damnable in the return, though it was not so much at the setting forth. Every idle word is to be accounted for, but we hope in much mercy; and yet he that gives himself over to immoderate talking[g], will swell his account to a vast and mountainous proportion, and call all the lesser escapes into a stricter judgment. He that extends his recreation an hour beyond the limits of Christian prudence, and the analogy of its severity and employment, is accountable to God for that improvidence and waste of time; but he that shall mis-spend a day, and because that sin is not scandalous like adultery, or clamorous like oppression, or unusual like bestiality, or crying for revenge like detaining the portion of orphans, shall therefore mis-spend another day, without revocation of the first by an act of repentance and redemption of it, and then shall throw away a week, still adding to the former account upon the first stock, will at last be answerable for a habit of idleness, and will have contracted a vain and impertinent spirit. For since things, which in their own kind are lawful, become sinful by the degree; if the degree be heightened by intention, or become great, like a heap of sand by a coacervation of the innumerable atoms of dust, the actions are as damnable as any of the natural daughters and productions of hell,

[f] Quæ humanæ fragilitati, quamvis parva, tamen crebra subrepunt, si collecta contra nos fuerint, ità nos gravabunt et oppriment, sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum. — *S. Aug.* lib. 1. hom. 50. Idem lib. de Pœnit. Peccata venialia si multiplicentur, decorem nostrum ità exterminant, ut à cœlestis sponsi amplexibus nos separent.

[g] Γλώσσῃ ματαίᾳ ζημία προστρίβεται. — *Æsch. Prom.* 329.
Ἀχαλίνων στομάτων τέλος δυστυχία. — *Eurip. Bacch.* 385.

when they are entertained without scruple, and renewed without repentance, and continued without dereliction.

14. Thirdly: Although some inadvertencies of our life and lesser disobediences accidentally become less hurtful, and because they are entailed upon the infirmities of a good man, and the less wary customs and circumstances of society, are also consistent with the state of grace; yet all affection[h] to the smallest sins becomes deadly and damnable. "He that loves his danger, shall perish in it," saith the wise man; and every friendly entertainment of an indecency invites in a greater crime; for no man can love a small sin, but there are in the greater crimes of its kind more desirable flatteries, and more satisfactions of sensuality, than in those suckers and sprigs of sin. At first, a little disobedience is proportionable to a man's temper, and his conscience is not fitted to the bulk of a rude crime: but when a man hath accepted the first insinuation of delight and swallowed it, that little sin is past, and needs no more to dispute for entrance; then the next design puts in, and stands in the same probability to succeed the first, and greater than the first had to make the entry. However, to love any thing that God hates, is direct enmity with him; and whatsoever the instance be, it is absolutely inconsistent with charity, and therefore incompetent with the state of grace. So that if the sin be small, it is not a small thing that thou hast given thy love to it; every such person perishes like a fool, cheaply and ingloriously.

15. Fourthly: But it also concerns the niceness and prudence of obedience to God, to stand at farther distance from a vice, than we usually attend to. For many times virtue and vice differ but one degree[i]; and the neighbourhood is so dangerous, that he who desires to secure his obedience and duty to God, will remove farther from the danger. For there is a rule of justice, to which if one degree more of severity be added, it degenerates into cruelty; and a little more mercy is remissness and want of discipline, introduces licentiousness, and becomes unmercifulness as to the public, and unjust as to the particular. Now this consideration is

[h] Nullum peccatum est adeò veniale, quod non fiat criminale, dum placet. —*Dist.* 25. sect. Nunc autem, ex *S. August.*

[i] Cùm fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum
Discernunt avidi. *Horat. Od.* xviii. lib. i.

heightened, if we observe, that virtue and vice consist not in an indivisible point; but there is a latitude for either, which is not to be judged by any certain rules drawn from the nature of the thing, but to be estimated in proportion to the persons and other accidental circumstances. He that is burdened with a great charge, for whom he is bound, under a curse and the crime of infidelity, to provide, may go farther in the acquisition, and be more provident in the use of his money, than those persons, for whom God hath made more ample provisions, and hath charged them with fewer burdens and engagements economical. And yet no man can say, that just beyond such a degree of care stands covetousness, and thus far on this side is carelessness; and a man may be in the confines of death, before he be aware. Now, the only way to secure our obedience and duty in such cases, is to remove farther off, and not to dwell upon the confines of the enemy's country. My meaning is, that it is not prudent nor safe for a man to do whatsoever he lawfully may do.

16. For besides that we are often mistaken in our judgments concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of actions, he that will do all, that he thinks he may lawfully do, if ever he does change his station, and increase in giving himself liberty, will quickly arrive at doing things unlawful. It is good to keep a reserve of our liberty, and to restrain ourselves within bounds narrower than the largest sense of the commandment, that when our affections wander and enlarge themselves, (as some time or other they will do,) then they may enlarge beyond the ordinary, and yet be within the bounds of lawfulness. That of which men make a scruple and a question at first, after an habitual resolution of it, stirs no more; but then their question is of something beyond it. When a man hath accustomed himself to pray seven times a day, it will a little trouble his peace, if he omits one or two of those times; but if it be resolved then, that he may please God with praying devoutly, though but thrice every day, after he hath digested the scruples of this first question, possibly some accidents may happen, that will put his conscience and reason to dispute, whether three times be indispensably necessary: and still, if he be far within the bounds of lawfulness, 'tis well; but if he be at the margin of it, his next remove may be into dissolution and unlawfulness. He

that resolves to gain all that he may lawfully this year, it is odds but, next year, he will be tempted to gain something unlawfully. He that, because a man may be innocently angry, will never restrain his passion, in a little time will be intemperate in his anger, and mistake both his object and the degree. Thus facetiousness and urbanity, entertained with an open hand, will turn into jestings that are uncomely.

17. If you will be secure, remove your tent, dwell farther off. God hath given us more liberty than we may safely use; and although God is so gracious as to comply much with our infirmities, yet if we do so too, as God's goodness in indulging liberty to us was to prevent our sinning, our complying with ourselves will engage us in it: but if we imprison and confine our affections into a narrower compass, then our extravagancies may be imperfect, but will not easily be criminal. The dissolution of a scrupulous and strict person, is not into a vice, but into a less degree of virtue. He that makes a conscience of loud laughter, will not easily be drawn into the wantonnesses of balls and revellings, and the longer and more impure carnivals. This is the way to secure our obedience; and no men are so curious of their health, as they that are scrupulous of the air they breathe in.

But now, for our obedience to man, that hath distinct considerations, and apart.

18. First: All obedience to man is for God's sake; for God, imprinting his authority upon the sons of men[k], like the sun reflecting upon a cloud, produces a parhelius, or a representation of his own glory, though in great distances and imperfection: it is the Divine authority, though charactered upon a piece of clay, and imprinted upon a weak and imperfect man. And therefore obedience to our superiors must be universal, in respect of persons, "to all superiors." This precept is expressly apostolical: "Be subject to every constitution and authority of man, for the Lord's sake[l]." It is for God's sake, and therefore to every one, "Whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to his ministers in subordination." That is for civil government. For ecclesiastical, this:

[k] Ἕκαστοι τῶν ἐξ ἴθους ἰδιόν τι γένος τὸ βασιλικὸν ὑπολαβόντες, ὅτιὼς αὐτοῖς πατέρας ἱστήσαντο· καὶ τοίνυν οἷς μὲν τὸ εὐγενὲς καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν ἄκρως ὑπάρχειν, ἐκ Διὸς τούτους ὑπάρχειν κατάγειν τὸ γένος.—*Eustath. ad Iliad.* i.

[l] 1 Pet. xiii. 2.

" Obey them, that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account[m]." All, upon whom any ray of the Divine authority is imprinted, whether it be in greater or smaller characters, are, in proportion to their authority, to be obeyed; to all upon the same ground; for " there is no power but of God[n]." So that no infirmity of person, no undervaluing circumstance, no exterior accident, is an excuse for disobedience: and to obey the Divine authority, passing through the dictates of a wise, excellent, and prudent governor, but to neglect the impositions of a looser head, is to worship Christ only upon the mount Tabor, and in the glories of his transfiguration, and to despise him upon mount Calvary, and in the clouds of his inglorious and humble passion: " Not only to the good and gentle," so St. Peter, " but to the harsh and rigid[o]." And it was by Divine Providence, that all those many and stricter precepts of obedience to governors in the New Testament were verified by instances of tyrants, persecutors, idolaters, and heathen princes; and for others, amongst whom there was variety of disposition, there is no variety of imposition, but all excuses are removed, and all kinds of governors drawn into the sanction and sacredness of authority.

19. Secondly: Not only " to all governors," but " in all things," we must obey. " Children, obey your parents in all things[p];" and " Servants, obey your masters in all things." And this also is upon the same ground; do it " as unto Christ; as unto the Lord, and not unto men[q]." But then this restrains the universality of obedience, that it may run within its own channel; " as unto the Lord," therefore nothing against the Divine commandment. For if God speaks to us by man, transmitting laws for conservation of civil society, for ecclesiastical policy, for justice and personal advantages, for the interests of virtue and religion, for discountenancing of vice, we are to receive it with the same veneration, as if God spake himself to us immediately. But because, by his terror upon mount Sinai, he gave testimony,

[m] Heb. xiii. 7.

[n] Rom. xiii. 1.
Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
Reges in ipsos imperium est Jovis,
Cuncta supercilio moventis.—*Hor.* lib. iii. Od. 1.

[o] Ubi suprà. [p] Col. iii. 20, 22. [q] Ephes. vi. 5, 7.

how great favour it is to speak to us by the ministration of our brethren, it were a strange impudence, when we desire a proportionable and gentle instrument of Divine commands, we should, for this very proportion, despise the minister; like the frogs in the apologue, insulting upon their wooden king. But then, if any thing come contrary to a Divine law, know "it is the voice of Jacob," of the supplanter, not of the right heir; and though we must obey man for God's sake, yet we must never disobey God for man's sake. In all things else we find no exception; but according as the superiors intend the obligation, and express it by the signature of laws, customs, interpretations, permissions, and dispensations; that is, so far as the law is obligatory in general, and not dispensed with in particular, so far obedience is a duty in all instances of acts, where no sin is ingredient.

20. Thirdly: And here also the smallness and cheapness of the duty does not tolerate disobedience; for the despising the smallest injunction is an act of as formal and direct rebellion, as when the prevarication is in a higher instance. It is here as in Divine laws, but yet with some difference: for small things do so little co-operate to the end of human laws, that a smaller reason does, by way of interpretation and tacit permission, dispense, than can in a Divine sanction, though of the lowest offices. Because God commands duties not for the end, to which they of themselves do co-operate; but to make sacred his authority; and that we, by our obedience, may confess him to be Lord: but, in human laws, the authority is made sacred, not primarily for itself, but principally, that the laws, made in order to the conservation of societies, may be observed. So that, in the neglect of the smallest of Divine ordinances, we as directly oppose God's great purpose and intendment, as in greater matters; God's dominion and authority, (the conservation of which was his principal intention,) is alike neglected: but, in omitting a human imposition of small concernment, the case is different[r]; it is certain, there is not any considerable violence done to the public interest by a contemptible omission of a law: the thing is not small, if the commonwealth be not safe, and all her great ends secured; but if they be, then the authority is

[r] De minimis non curat lex.

inviolate, unless a direct contempt were intended; for its being was in order to that end; not for itself, as it is in the case of Divine laws, but that the public interest be safe.

21. And therefore, as great matters of human laws may be omitted for great reasons, so may smaller matters for smaller reasons, but never without reason: for, "causelessly" and "contemptuously" are all one. But in the application of the particulars, either the laws themselves, or custom, or the prudence of a sincere righteous man, or of a wise and disinterested person, is to be the judge. But let no man's confidence increase, from the smallness of the matter to a contempt of the authority; for there are some sins, whose malignity is accidentally increased by the slightness of the subject matter; such are blasphemy, perjury, and the contempt of authority. To blaspheme God for the loss of an asper or a penny, to be forsworn in judgment for the rescuing of a few maravides or a five-groats fine, is a worse crime than to be perjured for the saving ten thousand pounds; and to despise authority, when the obedience is so easy as the wearing of a garment or doing of a posture, is a greater and more impudent contempt, than to despise authority imposing a great burden of a more considerable pressure, where human infirmity may tempt to a disobedience, and lessen the crime. And let this caution also be inserted, that we do not at all neglect small impositions, if there be direct and signal injunction in the particular instance. For as a great body of light, transmitting his rays through a narrow hollowness, does, by that small pyramis, represent all the parts of its magnitude and glory: so it may happen, that a public interest, and the concernments of authority, and the peace of a church, and the integral obedience of the subjects, and the conservation of a community, may be transferred to us by an instance, in its own nature, inconsiderable; such as are wearing of a cognizance, remembering of a word, carrying a branch in time of war, and things of the same nature: and therefore, when the hand of authority is stretched out and held forth upon a precept, and designs the duty upon particular reason, or with actual intuition; there is not the same facility of being dispensed with, as in the neglected and unconsidered instances of other duties.

This only I desire to be observed; that if death, or any

violent accident, imprisonment, loss of livelihood, or intolerable inconveniences be made accidentally consequent to the observing of a law merely human, the law binds not in the particular instance. No man is bound to be a martyr for a ceremony, or to die rather than break a canon, or to suffer confiscation of goods for the pertinacious keeping of a civil constitution. And it is not to be supposed, that a lawgiver would have decreed a rite, and bound the lives of the subjects to it, which are of a far greater value than a rite; not only because it were tyrannical and unreasonable, but because the evil of the law were greater than the good of it; it were against the reason of all laws, and destroys the privileges of nature, and it puts a man into a condition as bad as the want of all laws; for nothing is civilly or naturally worse than death, to which the other evils arrive in their proportion. This is to be understood in particular and positive precepts, introduced for reasons particular, that is, less than those are, which combine all societies, and which are the cement of all bodies political; I mean, laws ritual in the church, and accidental and emergent in the state. And that, which is the best sign to distinguish these laws from others, is also the reason of the assertion. Laws, decreed with a penalty to the transgressors, cannot bind to an evil greater than that penalty. If it be appointed, that we use a certain form of liturgy, under the forfeiture of five pounds for every omission, I am bound in conscience to obey it, where I can: but I am supposed legally to be disabled, if any tyrant power shall threaten to kill me if I do, or make me pay an hundred pounds, or any thing greater than the forfeiture of the law. For all the civil and natural power of the law is by its coercion, and the appendant punishment. The law operates by rewards and punishments, by hope and fear; and it is unimaginable that the law, under a less penalty, can oblige us, in any case or accident, to suffer a greater. For the compulsion of the tyrant is greater than the coercion of the lawgiver; and the prince, thinking the penalty annexed to be band sufficient, intended no greater evil to the transgressor, than the expressed penalty; and therefore much less would he have them, that obey the law by any necessity, be forced to a greater evil: for then, disobedience should escape better than obedience. True it is, every disobeying person, that

pays the penalty, is not quite discharged from all his obligation; but it is then, when his disobeying is criminal upon some other stock besides the mere breach of the law, as contempt, scandal, or the like: for the law binds the conscience indirectly, and by consequence; that is, in plain language, God commands us to obey human laws, and the penalty will not pay for the contempt, because that is a sin against God; it pays for the violation of the law, because that was all the direct transgression against man[s]. And then who shall make him recompense, for suffering more than the law requires of him? Not the prince; for it is certain, the greatest value he set upon the law, was no bigger than the penalty; and the commonwealth is supposed to be sufficiently secured in her interest by the penalty, or else the law was weak, impotent, and unreasonable. Not God; for it is not an act of obedience to him; for he binds us no farther to obey human laws, than the lawgiver himself intends or declares; who cannot reasonably be supposed so over careful, as to bind hay with cords of silk and gold, or sumptuary laws with the threads of life; nor a father commanding his child to wait on him every meal, be thought to intend his obligation, even though the house be ready to fall on his head, or when he is to pass a sudden or unfordable flood, before he can get to him. And that it may appear man ought not, it is certain God himself doth not oblige us, in all cases and in all circumstances, to observe every of his positive precepts. For, "assembling together[t]" is a duty of God's commanding, which we are "not to neglect:" but if death waits at the door of these assemblies, we have the practice of the primitive and best Christians, to warrant us to serve God in retirements, and cells, and wildernesses, and leave "the assembling together" till better opportunities. If I receive more benefit, or the commonwealth, or the church and religion, any greater advantage, by my particular obedience in these circumstances, (which cannot easily be supposed, will be,) it is a great act of charity to do it, and then to suffer for it: but if

[s] Lucius Veratius pro delectamento habuit os hominis liberi palmâ verberare. Eum servus sequebatur crumenam plenam assium gestans, et quemcunque percusserat, jussit statim numerari 25 asses, qui pro multâ huic offensæ ex lege XII. Tab. imponebantur. — *A. Gel.* lib. XX. c. 1.

[t] Heb. x. 25.

it be no more[a], that is, if it be not expressly commanded to be done, (though with loss of life or confiscation,) it is a good charity to save my own life, or my own estate: and though the other may be better, yet I am not in all cases obliged to do that, which is simply the best. It is a tolerable infirmity, and allowed amongst the very first permissions of nature, that I may preserve my life, unless it be in a very few cases, which are therefore clearly to be expressed, or else the contrary is to be presumed, as being a case most favourable. And it is considerable, that nothing is worse than death, but damnation, or something that partakes of that in some of its worst ingredients; such as is a lasting torment, or a daily great misery in some other kind. And therefore, since no human law can bind a man to a worse thing than death, if obedience brings me to death, I cannot be worse, when I disobey it; and I am not so bad, if the penalty of death be not expressed. And so for other penalties, in their own proportions.

This discourse is also to be understood concerning the laws of peace, not of war; not only because every disobedience in war may be punished with death, (according as the reason may chance,) but also, because little things may be of great and dangerous consequence. But in peace it is observable, that there is no human, positive, superinduced law, but by the practice of all the world, (which, because the permission of the prince is certainly included in it, is the surest interpretation,) it is dispensed withal, by ordinary necessities, by reason of lesser inconveniences and common accidents: thus the not saying of our office daily, is excused by the study of divinity; the publishing the bans of matrimony, by an ordinary incommodity; the fasting days of the church, by a little sickness or a journey; and therefore much rather if my estate, and most of all if my life, be in danger with it: and to say, that, in these cases, there is no interpretative permission to omit the particular action, is to accuse the laws and the lawgiver, the one of unreasonableness, the other of uncharitableness.

22. Fourthly: These considerations are upon the execution of the duty; but even towards man our obedience must

[a] Vide Part ii. Disc. x. n. 11.

have a mixture of the will and choice, like as our injunction of obedience to the Divine command. "With good will doing service," (saith the apostle,) for it is impossible to secure the duty of inferiors but by conscience and good will; unless provision could be made against all their secret arts, and concealments, and escapings; which, as no providence can foresee, so no diligence can cure. It is but an "eye-service," whatsoever is compelled and involuntary. Nothing rules a man in private, but God and his own desires; and they give laws in a wilderness, and accuse in a cloister, and do execution in a closet, if there be any prevarication.

23. Fifthly: But obedience to human laws goes no farther: we are not bound to obey with a direct and particular act of understanding, as in all Divine sanctions; for so long as our superiors are fallible, though it be highly necessary we conform our wills to their innocent laws, yet it is not a duty, we should think the laws most prudent or convenient; because all laws are not so; but it may concern the interest of humility and self-denial, to be subject to an inconvenient, so it be not a sinful, command: for so we must choose an affliction, when God offers it, and give God thanks for it; and yet we may cry under the smart of it, and call to God for ease and remedy. And yet it were well, if inferiors would not be too busy in disputing the prudence of their governors, and the convenience of their constitutions: whether they be sins or no in the execution, and to our particulars, we are concerned to look to; I say, as to our particulars; for an action may be a sin in the prince commanding it, and yet innocent in the person executing: as in the case of unjust wars, in which the subject, who cannot, ought not to be a judge, yet must be a minister; and it is notorious in the case of executing an unjust sentence, in which not the executioner, but the judge, is the only unjust person[x]; and he that serves his prince in an unjust war, is but the executioner of an unjust sentence: but whatever goes farther, does but undervalue the person, slight the government, and unloose the golden cords of discipline. For we are not intrusted in providing for degrees, so we secure the kind and condition of

[x] Is damnum dat, qui jubet dare: ejus verò nulla culpa est, cui parere necesse fit. — *Ulpian*, l. 130.

our actions. And since God, having derived rays and beams of majesty, and transmitted it in parts upon several states of men[y], hath fixed human authority and dominion in the golden candlestick of understanding, he that shall question the prudence of his governor, or the wisdom of his sanction, does unclasp the golden rings, that tie the purple upon the prince's shoulder; he tempts himself with a reason to disobey, and extinguish the light of majesty by overturning the candlestick, and hiding the opinion of his wisdom and understanding. And let me say this; he that is confident of his own understanding and reasonable powers, (and who is more than he, that thinks himself wiser than the laws?) needs no other devil in the neighbourhood, no tempter but himself to pride and vanity, which are the natural parents of disobedience.

24. But a man's disobedience never seems so reasonable[z], as when the subject is forbidden to do an act of piety, commanded indeed in the general, but uncommanded in certain circumstances. And forward piety and assiduous devotion, a great and indiscreet mortifier, is often tempted to think no authority can restrain the fervours and distempers of zeal in such holy exercises; and yet it is very often as necessary to restrain the indiscretions of a forward person, as to excite the remissness of the cold and frozen. Such persons were the Sarabaites, spoken of by Cassian[a], who were greater labourers and stricter mortifiers, than the religious in families and colleges; and yet they endured no superior, nor laws. But such customs as these are humiliation without humility; humbling the body, and exalting the spirit; or, indeed, sacrifices, and no obedience. It was an argument of the great wisdom of the fathers of the desert[b]: when they heard of the prodigious severities exercised by Simeon Stylites upon himself, they sent one of the religious to him, with power to inquire what was his manner of living, and what warrant he had for such a rigorous undertaking, giving in charge to command him to

[y] Μὴ ἐρίζε γονεῦσι, κἂν δίκαια λέγῃς. — *Laert.*

[z] Modum autem tenere in eo difficile est, quod bonum esse credideris. — *Sen.* ep. 23.

[a] Collat. xviii. c. 17.

[b] Apud Enagrium. De eodem Stylite consulat lector Epiph. lib. i. c. 13. Theod. et 7. Synod. gener. et Baron. ad A.D. 432.

give it over, and to live in a community with them, and according to the common institution of those religious families. The messenger did so; and immediately Simeon removed his foot from his pillar, with a purpose to descend; but the other, according to his commission, called to him to stay, telling him his station and severity was from God. And he that in so great a piety was humble and obedient, did not undertake that strictness out of singularity, nor did it transport him to vanity; for that he had received from the fathers to make judgment of the man, and of his institution: whereas if, upon pretence of the great holiness of that course, he had refused the command, the spirit of the person was to be declared caitive and imprudent, and the man driven from his troublesome and ostentatious vanity.

25. Our fasts, our prayers, our watchings, our intentions of duty, our frequent communions, and all exterior acts of religion, are to be guided by our superior, if he sees cause to restrain or assuage any excrescence. For a wound may heal too fast, and then the tumour of the flesh is proud, not healthful; and so may the indiscretions of religion swell to vanity, when we think they grow towards perfection: but when we can endure the caustics and correctives of our spiritual guides, in those things, in which we are most apt to please ourselves, then our obedience is regular and humble; and in other things there is less of danger. There is a story told of a very religious person[c], whose spirit, in the ecstacy of devotion, was transported to the clarity of a vision; and he seemed to converse personally with the holy Jesus, feeling from such intercourse great spiritual delights and huge satisfactions. In the midst of these joys, the bell called to prayers; and he, used to the strictness and well instructed in the necessities of obedience, went to the church, and having finished his devotions, returned, and found the vision in the same posture of glories and entertainment; which also said to him, "Because thou hast left me, thou hast found me; for if thou hadst not left me, I had presently left thee." Whatever the story be, I am sure it is a good parable; for the way to increase spiritual comforts is, to be strict in the offices of

[c] Cassian. Collat. iv. Abbat. Dam. c. 20. et S. Basil. Exhort. ad Vitam Monast. S. Greg. lib. xxxv. Moral. c. 13. S. Bern. De Ord. Vitæ et Morum Instit. c. 1.

humble obedience; and we never lose any thing of our joy, by laying it aside to attend a duty: and Plutarch reports more honour of Agesilaus' prudence and modesty, than of his gallantry and military fortune[d]; for he was more honourable by obeying the decree of the Spartan senate, recalling him from the midst of his triumphs, than he could have been by finishing the war with prosperous success and disobedience.

26. Our obedience, being guided by these rules, is urged to us by the consignation of Divine precepts and the loud voice of thunder, even sealed by a signet of God's right hand, the signature of greatest judgments. For God did, with greater severity, punish the rebellion of Korah and his company, than the express murmurs against himself; nay, than the high crime of idolatry: for this crime God visited them with a sword; but for disobedience and mutiny against their superiors, God made the earth to swallow some of them, and fire from heaven to consume the rest; to shew that rebellion is to be punished by the conspiration of heaven and earth, as it is hateful and contradictory both to God and man. And it is not amiss to observe, that obedience to man, being as it is "for God's sake," and yet to a person clothed with the circumstances and the same infirmities with ourselves, is a greater instance of humility, than to obey God immediately, whose authority is divine, whose presence is terrible, whose power is infinite, and not at all depressed by exterior disadvantages or lessening appearances: just as it is both greater faith and greater charity to relieve a poor saint, for Jesus' sake, than to give any thing to Christ himself, if he should appear in all the robes of glory and immediate address. For it is to God and to Christ, and wholly for their sakes, and to them that the obedience is done, or the charity expressed; but themselves are persons whose awfulness, majesty, and veneration, would rather force than invite obedience or alms. But when God and his holy Son stand behind the cloud, and send their servants to take the homage or the charity, it is the same as if it were done to them, but receives the advantage of acceptation, by the accidental

[d] Titus Manlius securi percussit filium, postquam hostem gloriosè vicerat in interdicta pugna.—*A. Gell.* lib. ix. c. 13.

adherences of faith and humility to the several actions respectively. When a king comes to rebels in person, it strikes terror and veneration into them, who are too apt to neglect and despise the person of his ministers, whom they look upon as their fellow-subjects, and consider not in the exaltation of a deputed majesty. Charles the Fifth found a happy experience of it at Gaunt, in Flanders, whose rebellion he appeased by his presence, which he could hardly have done by his army. But if the king's authority be as much revered in his deputy, as it is sacred in his own person, it is the greater humility and more confident obedience. And as it is certain, that he is the most humble, that submits to his inferiors; so, in the same proportion, the lower and meaner the instrument, upon which God's authority is borne, the higher is the grace, that teaches us to stoop so low. I do not say, that a sin against human laws is greater than a prevarication against a Divine commandment; as the instances may be, the distance is next to infinite, and to touch the earth with our foot within the octaves of Easter, or to taste flesh upon days of abstinence, (even in those places, and to those persons, where they did or do oblige,) have no consideration, if they be laid in balance against the crimes of adultery, or blasphemy, or oppression: because these crimes cannot stand with the reputation and sacredness of Divine authority; but those others may, in most instances, very well consist with the ends of government, which are severally provided for in the diversity of sanctions respectively. But if we make our instances to other purposes, we find, that to mutiny in an army, or to keep private assemblies in a monarchy, are worse than a single thought or morose delectation in a fancy of impurity; because those others destroy government, more than these destroy charity of God, or obedience. But then, though the instances may vary the conclusion, yet the formal reason is alike, and disobedience to man is a disobedience against God; for God's authority, and not man's, is imprinted upon the superior; and it is like sacred fire in an earthen censer, as holy as if it were kindled with the fanning of a cherub's wing, or placed just under the propitiatory upon a golden altar; and it is but a gross conceit, which cannot distinguish religion from its porter, Isis from the beast that carried it: so that, in all disobedience to men, in proportion to the greatness

of the matter, or the malice of the person, or his contradiction to the ends of government and combinations of society, we may use the words by which the prophet upbraided Israel, "Is it not enough that you are grievous unto men, but will you grieve my God also[e]?" It is a contempt of the Divinity, and the affront is transmitted to God himself, when we despise the power, which God hath ordained, and all power of every lawful superior is such; the Spirit of God being witness in the highest measure, "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry[f]." It is spoken of rebellion against God[g], and all rebellion is so; for "he that despiseth you, despiseth me[h]," saith the blessed Jesus; that is menace enough in the instance of spiritual regiment. And, "You are gathered together against the Lord," saith Moses to the rebellious princes in the conspiracy of Dathan; that is for the temporal. And to encourage this duty, I shall use no other words than those of Achilles in Homer, "They that obey in this world, are better than they that command in hell[i]."

A Prayer for the Grace of Holy Obedience.

O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus, by whose obedience many became righteous, and reparations were made of the ruins, brought to human nature by the disobedience of Adam; thou camest into the world with many great and holy purposes concerning our salvation, and hast given us a great precedent of obedience, which, that thou mightest preserve to thy heavenly Father, thou didst neglect thy life, and becamest obedient even to the death of the cross. O, let me imitate so blessed example, and, by the merits of thy obedience, let me obtain the grace of humility and abnegation of all my own desires in the clearest renunciation of my will; that I may will and refuse in conformity

[e] Isaiah, vii. 13.

[f] 1 Samuel, xv. 23.

[g] Ἡμῖν δὲ πολλῶν νόμων καὶ καλῶν ὄντων, κάλλιστος ὅτός ἐστι,
Τιμᾷν βασιλέα, καὶ προσκυνεῖν εἰκόνα Θεοῦ πάντα σώζοντος.
Plutarch. in Themist.

[h] Ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμοὶ βασιλῆι μάχοιτο.

[i] Βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύεμεν ἄλλῳ
Ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,
Ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν. — *Od.* λ. 488.

to thy sacred laws and holy purposes; that I may do all thy will cheerfully, choosingly, humbly, confidently, and continually; and thy will may be done upon me with much mercy and fatherly dispensation of thy providence. Amen.

II.

Lord, let my understanding adhere to, and be satisfied in, the excellent wisdom of thy commandments; let my affections dwell in their desires, and all my other faculties be set on daily work for performance of them: and let my love to obey thee make me dutiful to my superiors, upon whom the impresses of thy authority are set by thine own hand; that I may never despise their persons, nor refuse their injunctions, nor choose mine own work, nor murmur at their burdens, nor dispute the prudence of the sanction, nor excuse myself, nor pretend difficulties or impossibilities; but that I may be indifferent in my desires, and resigned to the will of those, whom thou hast set over me; that since all thy creatures obey thy word, I alone may not disorder the creation, and cancel those bands and intermedial links of subordination, whereby my duty should pass to thee and thy glory, but that my obedience being united to thy obedience, I may also have my portion in the glories of thy kingdom, O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

1. THE holy Virgin-mother, according to the law of Moses, at the expiration of a certain time, came to the temple to be purified. Although, in her sacred parturition, she had contracted no legal impurity, yet she exposed herself to the public opinion and common reputation of an ordinary condition; and still amongst all generations, she is, in all circumstances, accounted blessed, and her reputation no tittle altered, save only, that it is made the more sacred by this testimony of her humility. But this we are taught from the consequence of this instance; that if an end, principally designed in any duty, should be supplied otherwise in any particular person,

the duty is nevertheless to be observed; and then the obedience and public order is reason enough for the observation, though the proper end of its designation be wanting in the single person. Thus is fasting designed for mortification[a] of the flesh, and killing all its unruly appetites; and yet married persons, who have another remedy, and a virgin, whose temple is hallowed by a gift and the strict observances of chastity, may be tied to the duty: and if they might not, then fasting were nothing else but a publication of our impure desires, and an exposing the person to the confidence of a bold temptation, whilst the young men did observe the faster to be tempted from within. But the holy Virgin, from these acts, (of which, in signification, she had no need, because she sinned not in the conception, nor was impure in the production,) expressed other virtues besides obedience; such as were humble thoughts of herself, devotion and reverence to public sanctions, religion and charity, which were like the pure leaves of the whitest lily, fit to represent the beauties of her innocence, but were veiled and shadowed by that sacramental of the Mosaic law.

2. The holy Virgin received the greatest favour, that any of the daughters of Adam ever did; and knowing from whence, and for whose glory she had received it, returns the holy Jesus in a present to God again; for she had nothing so precious as himself to make oblation of: and besides that "every first-born among the males was holy to the Lord;" this child had an eternal and essential sanctity; and until he came into the world, and was made apt for her to make a present of him, there was never in the world any act of adoration proportionable to the honour of the great God; but now there was, and the holy Virgin made it, when she presented the holy child Jesus. And now, besides that we are taught to return to God whatsoever we have received from him, if we unite our offerings and devotions to this holy present, we shall, by the merit and excellency of this oblation, exhibit to God an offertory, in which he cannot but delight, for the combination's sake and society of his holy Son.

3. The holy mother brought five sicles, and a pair of turtle-doves, to redeem the Lamb of God from the anathema;

[a] Vide Rodriquez in Explic. Bullæ Cruciatæ; and Sir Thomas More against Tindal.

because every first-born was to be sacrificed to God, or redeemed if it was clean: it was the poor man's price, and the holy Jesus was never set at the greater prices, when he was estimated upon earth. For he, that was Lord of the kingdom, chose his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance; and so it was from his nativity hither. For at his birth he was poor, at his circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sinner; at his presentation poor, and like a sinner and a servant, for he chose to be redeemed with an ignoble price. The five sicles were given to the priest for the redemption of the child; and if the parents were not able, he was to be a servant of the temple, and to minister in the inferior offices to the priest; and this was God's seizure and possession of him: for although all the servants of God are his inheritance, yet the ministers of religion, who derive their portion of temporals from his title, who live upon the corban, and eat the meat of the altar, which is God's peculiar, and come nearer to his holiness by the addresses of an immediate ministration, are God's own upon another and a distinct challenge. But because Christ was to be the prince of another ministry, and the chief priest of another order, he was redeemed from attending the Mosaic rites, which he came to abolish, that he might do his Father's business, in establishing the evangelical. Only remember, that the ministers of religion are but God's usufructuaries: as they are not lords of God's portion, and therefore must dispense it like stewards, not like masters; so the people are not their patrons in paying, nor they their beneficiaries in receiving tithes, or other provisions of maintenance; they owe for it to none but to God himself: and it would also be considered, that, in all sacrilegious detentions of ecclesiastical rights, God is the person principally injured.

4. The turtle-doves[b] were offered also with the signification of another mystery. In the sacred rites of marriage, although the permissions of natural desires are such, as are most ordinate to their ends, the avoiding fornication, the alleviation of economical cares and vexations, and the production of children, and mutual comfort and support; yet the apertures and permissions of marriage have such restraints

[b] Sed pudicitia illis prima, et neutri nota adulteria: conjugii fidem non violant. — *Plin.* lib. x. c. 33.

of modesty and prudence, that all transgression of the just order to such ends is a crime: and besides these, there may be degrees of inordination or obliquity of intention, or too sensual complacency, or unhandsome preparations of mind, or unsacramental thoughts; in which particulars, because we have no determined rule but prudence, and the analogy of the rite, and the severity of our religion, which allow in some cases more, in some less, and always uncertain latitudes, for aught we know, there may be lighter transgressions, something that we know not of: and for these at the purification of the woman, it is supposed, the offering was made, and the turtles, by being an oblation, did deprecate a supposed irregularity; but by being a chaste and marital emblem, they professed the obliquity (if any were) was within the protection of the sacred bands of marriage, and therefore so excusable as to be expiated by a cheap offering. And what they did in hieroglyphic, Christians must do in the exposition; be strict observers of the main rites and principal obligations, and not neglectful to deprecate the lesser unhandsomenesses of the too sensual applications.

5. God had, at that instant, so ordered, that, for great ends of his own and theirs, two very holy persons, of diverse sexes and like piety, Simeon and Anna, the one who lived an active and secular, the other a retired and contemplative life, should come into the temple by revelation and direction of the Holy Spirit, and see him whom they and all the world did look for, "the Lord's Christ, the consolation of Israel." They saw him, they rejoiced, they worshipped, they prophesied, they sang hymns; and old Simeon did comprehend and circumscribe in his arms him, that filled all the world, and was then so satisfied, that he desired to live no longer: God had verified his promise, had shown him the Messias, had filled his heart with joy, and made his old age honourable; and now, after all this sight, no object could be pleasant but the joys of Paradise. For as a man, who hath stared too freely upon the face and beauties of the sun, is blind and dark to objects of a less splendour, and is forced to shut his eyes, that he may, through the degrees of darkness, perceive the inferior beauties of more proportioned objects: so was old Simeon; his eyes were so filled with the glories of this revelation, that he was willing to close them in his last night, that

he might be brought into the communications of eternity; and he could never more find comfort in any other object this world could minister. For such is the excellency of spiritual things, when they have once filled the corners of our hearts, and made us highly sensible and apprehensive of the interior beauties of God and of religion, all things of this world are flat and empty, and unsatisfying vanities, as unpleasant as the lees of vinegar to a tongue filled with the spirit of high Italic wines. And until we are so dead to the world as to apprehend no gust or freer complacency in exterior objects, we never have entertained Christ, or have had our cups overflow with devotion, or are filled with the Spirit. When our chalice is filled with holy oil, with the anointing from above, it will entertain none of the waters of bitterness; or if it does, they are thrust to the bottom, they are the lowest of our desires, and therefore only admitted, because they are natural and constituent.

6. The good old prophetess, Anna, had lived long in chaste widowhood, in the service of the temple, in the continual offices of devotion, in fasting and prayer; and now came the happy instant, in which God would give her a great benediction, and an earnest of a greater. The returns of prayer, and the blessings of piety, are certain; and though not dispensed according to the expectances of our narrow conceptions, yet shall they so come, at such times and in such measures, as shall crown the piety, and satisfy the desires, and reward the expectation. It was in the temple, the same place where she had for so many years poured out her heart to God, that God poured forth his heart to her, sent his Son from his bosom, and there she received his benediction. Indeed in such places God does most particularly exhibit himself, and blessing goes along with him, wherever he goes. In holy places God hath put his holy name, and to holy persons God does oftentimes manifest the interior and more secret glories of his holiness; provided they come thither, as old Simeon and Anna did, by the motions of the Holy Spirit, not with designs of vanity, or curiosity, or sensuality; for such spirits as those, come to profane and desecrate the house, and unhallow the person, and provoke the Deity of the place, and blast us with unwholesome airs.

7. But "Joseph and Mary wondered at those things which were spoken," and treasured them in their hearts, and they became matter of devotion and mental prayer, or meditation.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who, by the inspirations of thy Holy Spirit, didst direct thy servants, Simeon and Anna, to the temple, at the instant of the presentation of the holy child Jesus, that so thou mightest verify thy promise, and manifest thy Son, and reward the piety of holy people, who longed for redemption by the coming of the Messias; give me the perpetual assistance of the same Spirit to be as a monitor and a guide to me, leading me to all holy actions, and to the embracements and possessions of thy glorious Son; and remember all thy faithful people, who wait for the consolation and redemption of the church from all her miseries and persecutions, and at last satisfy their desires by the revelations of thy mercies and salvation. Thou hast advanced thy holy Child, and set him up for a sign of thy mercies, and a representation of thy glories. Lord, let no act, or thought, or word of mine, ever be in contradiction to this blessed sign; but let it be for the ruin of all my vices, and all the powers the devil employs against the church, and for the raising up all those virtues and graces, which thou didst design me in the purposes of eternity: but let my portion never be amongst the incredulous, or the scornful, or the heretical, or the profane, or any of those who stumble at this stone, which thou hast laid for the foundation of thy church, and the structures of a virtuous life. Remember me with much mercy and compassion, when the sword of sorrows or afflictions shall pierce my heart; first transfix me with love, and then all the troubles of this world will be consignations to the joys of a better: which grant for the mercies and the name's sake of thy holy child Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE III.

Of Meditation.

1. If, in the definition of meditation, I should call it an unaccustomed and unpractised duty, I should speak a truth, though somewhat inartificially: for not only the interior beauties and brighter excellencies are as unfelt as ideas and abstractions are, but also the practice and common knowledge of the duty itself are strangers to us, like the retirements of the deep, or the undiscovered treasures of the Indian hills. And this is a very great cause of the dryness and expiration of men's devotion, because our souls are so little refreshed with the waters and holy dews of meditation. We go to our prayers by chance, or order, or by determination of accidental occurrences; and we recite them, as we read a book; and sometimes we are sensible of the duty, and a flash of lightning makes the room bright, and our prayers end, and the lightning is gone, and we as dark as ever. We draw our water from standing pools, which never are filled but with sudden showers, and therefore we are dry so often: whereas if we would draw water from the fountains of our Saviour, and derive them through the channel of diligent and prudent meditations, our devotion would be a continual current, and safe against the barrenness of frequent droughts.

2. For meditation is an attention and application of spirit to Divine things; a searching out all instruments to a holy life, a devout consideration of them, and a production of those affections, which are in a direct order to the love of God and a pious conversation. Indeed meditation is all that great instrument of piety, whereby it is made prudent, and reasonable, and orderly, and perpetual. For, supposing our memory instructed with the knowledge of such mysteries and revelations, as are apt to entertain the spirit, the understanding is first and best employed in the consideration of them, and then the will in their reception, when they are duly prepared and so transmitted; and both these in such manner, and to such purposes, that they become the magazine and

great repositories of grace, and instrumental to all designs of virtue.

3. For the understanding is not to consider the matter of any meditation in itself, or as it determines in natural excellencies or unworthiness respectively, or with a purpose to furnish itself with notion and riches of knowledge; for that is like the winter sun: it shines, but warms not; but in such order as themselves are put in the designations of theology, in the order of Divine laws, in their spiritual capacity, and as they have influence upon holiness: for the understanding here is something else besides the intellectual power of the soul, it is the spirit; that is, it is celestial in its application, as it is spiritual in its nature; and we may understand it well by considering the beatifical portions of soul and body in their future glories. For therefore, even our bodies in the resurrection shall be spiritual, because the operation of them shall be in order to spiritual glories, and their natural actions (such as are seeing and speaking) shall have a spiritual object and supernatural end; and here, as we partake of such excellencies and co-operate to such purposes, men are more or less spiritual. And so is the understanding taken from its first and lowest ends of resting in notion and ineffective contemplation, and is made spirit; that is, wholly ruled and guided by God's Spirit to supernatural ends and spiritual employments; so that it understands and considers the motions of the "heavens, to declare the glory of God," the prodigies and alterations in the firmament, to demonstrate his handy work; it considers the excellent order of creatures, that we may not disturb the order of creation, or dissolve the golden chain of subordination. Aristotle and Porphyry, and the other Greek philosophers, studied the heavens, to search out their natural causes and production of bodies; the wiser Chaldees and Assyrians studied the same things, that they might learn their influences upon us, and make predictions of contingencies; the more moral Egyptian described his theorems in hieroglyphics and fantastic representments, to teach principles of policy, economy, and other prudences of morality and secular negotiation: but the same philosophy, when it is made Christian, considers as they did, but to greater purposes, even that from the book of the creatures we may

glorify the Creator, and hence derive arguments of worship and religion; this is Christian philosophy.

4. I instance only in considerations natural to spiritual purposes; but the same is the manner in all meditation, whether the matter of it be nature or revelation. For if we think of hell, and consider the infinity of its duration, and that its flames last as long as God lasts, and thence conjecture, upon the rules of proportion, why a finite creature may have an infinite, unnatural duration; or think by what ways a material fire can torment an immaterial substance; or why the devils, who are intelligent and wise creatures, should be so foolish as to hate God, from whom they know every rivulet of amability derives; this is to study, not to meditate: for meditation considers any thing, that may best make us to avoid the place, and to quit a vicious habit, or master and rectify an untoward inclination, or purchase a virtue, or exercise one: so that meditation is an act of the understanding put to the right use.

5. For the holy Jesus, coming to redeem us from the bottomless pit, did it, by lifting us up out of the puddles of impurity and the unwholesome waters of vanity; "he redeemed us from our vain conversation;" and our understandings had so many vanities, that they were made instruments of great impiety. The unlearned and ruder nations had fewer virtues; but they had also fewer vices than the wise empires, that ruled the world with violence and wit together. The softer Asians[a] had lust and intemperance in a full chalice; but their understandings were ruder than the finer Latins; for these men's understandings distilled wickedness as through a limbeck, and the Romans drank spirits and the sublimed quintessences of villany; whereas the other made themselves drunk with the lees and cheaper instances of sin: so that the understanding is not an idle and useless faculty; but naturally drives to practice, and brings guests into the inward cabinet of the will, and there they are entertained and feasted. And those understandings, which did not serve the baser end of vices, yet were unprofitable for the most part, and furnished their inward rooms with glasses and beads, and trifles fit for

[a] Τοὺς Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ὑπὸ τρυφῆς προκηρύττειν τοῖς ἐφευρίσκουσί τινα καινὴν ἡδονὴν ἀργυρίου πλῆθος. — *Athen.* lib. iv.

an American mart. From all these impurities and vanities, Jesus hath redeemed all his disciples, and not only thrown out of his temples all the impure rites of Flora and Cybele, but also the trifling and unprofitable ceremonies of the more sober deities; not only vices, but useless and unprofitable speculations; and hath consecrated our head into a temple, our understanding to spirit, our reason to religion, our study to meditation: and this is the first part of the sanctification of our spirit.

6. And this was the cause, holy Scripture commands the duty of meditation in proportion still to the excellencies of piety and a holy life, to which it is highly and aptly instrumental. "Blessed is the man, that meditates in the law of the Lord, day and night[b]." And the reason of the proposition, and the use of the duty, is expressed to this purpose: "Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I should not sin against thee[c]." The placing and fixing those Divine considerations in our understandings, and hiding them there, are designs of high Christian prudence, that they, with advantage, may come forth in the expresses of a holy life. For what in the world is more apt and natural to produce humility, than to meditate upon the low stoopings and descents of the holy Jesus, to the nature of a man, to the weaknesses of a child, to the poverties of a stable, to the ignobleness of a servant, to the shame of the cross, to the pains of cruelty, to the dust of death, to the title of a sinner, and to the wrath of God? By this instance, poverty is made honourable, and humility is sanctified and made noble, and the contradictions of nature are amiable, and fitted for a wise election. Thus hatred of sin, shame of ourselves, confusion at the sense of human misery, the love of God, confidence in his promises, desires of heaven, holy resolutions, resignation of our own appetites, conformity to Divine will, oblations of ourselves, repentance and mortification, are the proper emanations from meditation of the sordidness of sin, our proneness to it, our daily miseries as issues of Divine vengeance, the glories of God, his infinite unalterable veracity, the satisfactions in the vision of God, the rewards of piety, the rectitude of the laws of God, and perfection of his sanctions, God's supreme and

[b] Psalm i. 2. [c] Psalm cxix. 11.

paternal dominion, and his certain malediction of sinners: and when any one of these considerations is taken to pieces, and so placed in the rooms of application, that a piece of duty is conjoined to a piece of the mystery, and the whole office to the purchase of a grace, or the extermination of a vice, it is like opening our windows to let in the sun and the wind; and holiness is as proportioned an effect to this practice, as glory is to a persevering holiness, by way of reward and moral causality.

7. For all the affections, that are in man, are either natural, or by chance, or by the incitation of reason and discourse. Our natural affections are not worthy the entertainments of a Christian; they must be supernatural and divine, that put us into the hopes of perfection and felicities: and these other, that are good, unless they come by meditation, they are but accidental, and set with the evening sun. But if they be produced upon the strengths of pious meditation, they are as perpetual as they are reasonable, and excellent in proportion to the piety of the principle. A garden, that is watered with short and sudden showers, is more uncertain in its fruits and beauties, than if a rivulet waters it with a perpetual distilling and constant humectation: and just such are the short emissions and unpremeditated resolutions of piety, begotten by a dash of holy rain from heaven, whereby God sometimes uses to call the careless but to taste what excellencies of piety they neglect; but if they be not produced by the reason of religion, and the philosophy of meditation, they have but the life of a fly or a tall gourd; they come into the world, only to say they had a being; you could scarce know their length, but by measuring the ground they cover in their fall.

8. For since we are more moved by material and sensible objects than by things merely speculative and intellectual, and generals, even in spiritual things, are less perceived and less motive than particulars; meditation frames the understanding part of religion to the proportions of our nature and our weakness, by making some things more circumstantiate and material, and the more spiritual to be particular, and therefore the more applicable: and the mystery is made like the Gospel to the apostles: "Our eyes do see, and our ears do hear, and our hands do handle, thus much of the word of life," as is prepared for us in the meditation.

9. First: And, therefore, every wise person, that intends to furnish himself with affections of religion, or detestation against a vice, or glorifications of a mystery, still will proportion the mystery, and fit it with such circumstances of fancy and application, as, by observation of himself, he knows aptest to make impression. It was a wise design of Mark Antony, when he would stir up the people to revenge the death of Cæsar; he brought his body to the pleading-place, he shewed his wounds, held up the rent mantle, and shewed them the garment, that he put on that night, in which he beat the Nervii; that is, in which he won a victory, for which his memory was dear to them; he shewed them that wound, which pierced his heart, in which they were placed by so dear a love, that he made them his heirs, and left to their public use places of delight and pleasure: and then it was natural, when he had made those things present to them, which had once moved their love and his honour, that grief at the loss of so honourable and so loved a person should succeed; and then they were lords of all; their sorrow and revenge seldom slept in two beds. And thus holy meditation produces the passions and desires it intends; it makes the object present and almost sensible; it renews the first passions by a fiction of imagination; it passes from the paschal parlour to Cedron, it tells the drops of sweat, and measures them, and finds them as big as drops of blood, and then conjectures at the greatness of our sins; it fears in the midst of Christ's agonies, it hears his groans, it spies Judas's lantern afar off, it follows Jesus to Gabbatha, and wonders at his innocence and their malice, and feels the strokes of the whip, and shrinks the head, when the crown of thorns is thrust hard upon his holy brows; and, at last, goes step by step with Jesus, and carries part of the cross, and is nailed fast with sorrow and compassion, and dies with love. For if the soul be the principle of its own actions, it can produce the same effects by reflex acts of the understanding, when it is assisted by the imaginative part, as when it sees the thing acted: only let the meditation be as minute, particular, and circumstantiate, as it may; for a widow, by representing the caresses of her dead husband's love, produces sorrow, and the new affections of a sad endearment. It is too sure, that the recalling the circumstances of a past impurity does re-enkindle the flame, and entertain the

fancy with the burnings of an impure fire; and this happens, not by any advantages of vice, but by the nature of the thing, and the efficacy of circumstances. So does holy meditation produce those impresses and signatures, which are the proper effects of the mystery, if presented in a right line and direct representation.

10. Secondly: He that means to meditate in the best order to the productions of piety, must not be inquisitive for the highest mysteries; but the plainest propositions are to him of the greatest use and evidence. For meditation is the duty of all; and therefore God hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding; and the greatest mysteries of Christianity are plainest, and yet most fruitful of meditation, and most useful to the production of piety. High speculations are as barren as the tops of cedars; but the fundamentals of Christianity are fruitful as the vallies or the creeping vine. For know, that it is no meditation, but it may be an illusion, when you consider mysteries to become more learned, without thoughts of improving piety. Let your affections be as high, as they can climb towards God, so your considerations be humble, fruitful, and practically mysterious. "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest," said David. The wings of an eagle would have carried him higher, but yet the innocent dove did furnish him with the better emblem to represent his humble design; and lower meditations might sooner bring him to rest in God. It was a saying of Ægidius, "that an old and a simple woman, if she loves Jesus, may be greater than was brother Bonaventure." Want of learning, and disability to consider great secrets of theology, does not at all retard our progress to spiritual perfections; love to Jesus may be better promoted by the plainer understandings of honest and unlettered people, than by the finer and more exalted speculations of great clerks, that have less devotion. For although the way of serving God by the understanding be the best and most lasting, yet it is not necessary the understanding should be dressed with troublesome and laborious notions: the reason, that is in religion, is the surest principle to engage our services, and more perpetual than the sweetnesses and the motives of affection; but every honest man's understanding is then best furnished with the discourses and the reasonable

parts of religion, when he knows those mysteries of religion, upon which Christ and his apostles did build a holy life, and the superstructures of piety; those are the best materials of his meditation.

11. So that meditation is nothing else but the using of all those arguments, motives, and irradiations, which God intended to be instrumental to piety. It is a composition of both ways; for it stirs up our affections by reason and the way of understanding, that the wise soul may be satisfied in the reasonableness of the thing, and the affectionate may be entertained with the sweetnesses of holy passion; that our judgment be determined by discourse, and our appetites made active by the caresses of a religious fancy. And, therefore, the use of meditation is, to consider any of the mysteries of religion with purposes to draw from it rules of life, or affections to virtue, or detestation of vice; and from hence the man rises to devotion, and mental prayer, and intercourse with God; and, after that, he rests himself in the bosom of beatitude, and is swallowed up with the comprehensions of love and contemplation. These are the several degrees of meditation. But let us first understand that part of it, which is duty; and then, if any thing succeed of a middle condition between duty and reward, we will consider also, how that duty is to be performed, and how the reward is to be managed, that it may prove to be no illusion: therefore I add also this consideration.

12. Thirdly: Whatsoever pious purposes and deliberations are entertained in the act of meditation, they are carefully to be maintained and thrust forward to actual performances, although they were indefinite and indeterminate, and no other ways decreed but by resolutions and determinations of reason and judgment. For God assists every pious action according to its exigence and capacity; and therefore blesses holy meditations with results of reason, and prepossessions dogmatically decreeing the necessity of virtue, and the convenience of certain exercises in order to the purchase of it. He, then, that neglects to actuate such discourses, loses the benefit of his meditation; he is gone no farther, than when he first set out, and neglects the inspirations of the holy Spirit. For if, at any time, it be certain, what spirit it is, that speaks within the soul, it is most certain, that it is the

good Spirit, that moves us to an act of virtue, in order to acquisition of the habit: and when God's grace hath assisted us so far in our meditation, that we understand our duty, and are moved with present arguments, if we put not forth our hand and make use of them, we do nothing towards our duty; and it is not certain, that God will create graces in us, as he does the soul. Let every pious person think every conclusion of reason in his meditation to have passed an obligation upon him: and if he hath decreed, that fasting so often, and doing so many religious acts, is convenient and conducing to the production of a grace he is in pursuit of; let him know, that every such decree and reasonable proposition is the grace of God, instrumental to piety, part of his assistance, and therefore, in no case, to be extinguished.

13. Fourthly: In meditation, let the understanding be restrained, and under such prudent coercion and confinement, that it wander not from one discourse to another, till it hath perceived some fruit from the first; either that his soul be instructed in a duty, or moved by a new argument, or confirmed in an old, or determined to some exercise and intermedial action of religion, or hath broke out into some prayers and intercourse with God, in order to the production of a virtue. And this is the mystical design of the spouse in the Canticles of Solomon: "I adjure you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please[d]." For it is lightness of spirit to pass over a field of flowers and to fix nowhere, but to leave it without carrying some honey with us; unless the subject be of itself barren and unfruitful, and then why was it chosen? or that it is made so by our indisposition, and then indeed it is to be quitted. But (it is St. Chrysostom's simile) as a lamb, sucking the breast of its dam and mother, moves the head from one part to another, till it hath found a distilling fontinel, and then it fixes, till it be satisfied, or the fountain cease dropping; so should we, in meditation, reject such materials, as are barren like the tops of hills, and fix upon such thoughts, which nourish and refresh; and there dwell, till the nourishment be drawn forth, or so much of it as we can then temperately digest.

[d] Cant. iii. 5.

14. Fifthly: In meditation, strive rather for graces than for gifts, for affections in the way of virtue more than the overflowings of sensible devotion; and, therefore, if thou findest any thing, by which thou mayest be better, though thy spirit do not actually rejoice, or find any gust or relish in the manducation, yet choose it greedily. For although the chief end of meditation be affection, and not determinations intellectual; yet there is choice to be had of the affections; and care must be taken, that the affections be desires of virtue, or repudiations and aversions from something criminal; not joys and transportations spiritual, comforts, and complacencies; for they are no part of our duty: sometimes they are encouragements, and sometimes rewards; sometimes they depend upon habitude and disposition of body, and seem great matters, when they have little in them; and are more bodily than spiritual, like the gift of tears, and yearning of the bowels; and sometimes they are illusions and temptations, at which if the soul stoops and be greedy after, they may prove like Hippomenes's golden apples to Atalanta, retard our course, and possibly do some hazard to the whole race. And this will be nearer reduced to practice, if we consider the variety of matter, which is fitted to the meditation in several states of men travelling towards heaven.

15. For the first beginners in religion are employed in the mastering of their first appetites, casting out their devils, exterminating all evil customs, lessening the proclivity of habits, and countermanding the too great forwardness of vicious inclinations; and this, which divines call the purgative way, is wholly spent in actions of repentance, mortification, and self-denial: and therefore, if a penitent person snatches at comforts, or the tastes of sensible devotion, his repentance is too delicate; it is but a rod of roses and jessamine. If God sees the spirit broken all in pieces, and that it needs a little of the oil of gladness for its support and restitution to the capacities of its duty, he will give it; but this is not to be designed, nor snatched at in the meditation: tears of joy are not good expressions nor instruments of repentance; we must not "gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles;" no refreshments to be looked for here, but such only, as are necessary for support; and when God sees they are, let not us trouble ourselves; he will provide them. But

the meditations, which are prompt to this purgative way and practice of first beginners, are not apt to produce delicacies, but in the sequel and consequent of it. "Afterwards it brings forth the pleasant fruit of righteousness," but "for the present, it hath no joy in it," no joy of sense, though much satisfaction to reason. And such are meditations of the fall of angels and man, the ejection of them from heaven, of our parents from paradise, the horror and obliquity of sin, the wrath of God, the severity of his anger, mortification of our body and spirit, self-denial, the cross of Christ, death, and hell, and judgment, the terrors of an evil conscience, the insecurities of a sinner, the unreasonableness of sin, the troubles of repentance, the worm and sting of a burdened spirit, the difficulties of rooting out evil habits, and the utter abolition of sin: if these nettles bear honey, we may fill ourselves; but such sweetnesses spoil the operations of these bitter potions. Here, therefore, let your addresses to God, and your mental prayers, be affectionate desires of pardon, humble considerations of ourselves, thoughts of revenge against our crimes, designs of mortification, indefatigable solicitations for mercy, expresses of shame and confusion of face; and he meditates best in the purgative way, that makes these affections most operative and high.

16. After our first step is taken, and the punitive part of repentance is resolved on, and begun, and put forward into good degrees of progress, we then enter into the illuminative way of religion, and set upon the acquist of virtues, and the purchase of spiritual graces; and, therefore, our meditations are to be proportioned to the design of that employment: such as are considerations of the life of Jesus, examples of saints, reasons of virtue, means of acquiring them, designations of proper exercises to every pious habit, the eight beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, the promises of the Gospel, the attributes of God, as they are revealed to represent God to be infinite, and to make us religious, the rewards of heaven, excellent and select sentences of holy persons, to be as incentives of piety. These are the proper matter for proficients in religion. But then the affections producible from these are love of virtue, desires to imitate the holy Jesus, affections to saints and holy persons, conformity of choice, subordination to God's will, elec-

tion of the ways of virtue, satisfaction of the understanding in the ways of religion, and resolutions to pursue them in the midst of all discomforts and persecutions; and our mental prayers or intercourse with God, which are the present emanations of our meditations, must be in order to these affections, and productions from those: and in all these, yet there is safety and piety, and no seeking of ourselves, but designs of virtue in just reason and duty to God, and for his sake; that is, for his commandment. And in all these particulars, if there be such a sterility of spirit, that there be no end served but of spiritual profit, we are never the worse; all that God requires of us is, that we will live well, and repent in just measure and right manner; and he that doth so, hath meditated well.

17. From hence, if a pious soul passes to affections of greater sublimity, and intimate and more immediate, abstracted and immaterial love, it is well; only remember, that the love God requires of us, is an operative, material, and communicative love; "If ye love me, keep my commandments:" so that still a good life is the effect of the sublimest meditation; and if we make our duty sure behind us, ascend up as high into the mountain as you can, so your ascent may consist with the securities of your person, the condition of infirmity, and the interests of your duty. According to the saying of Ildefonsus, "Our empty saying of lauds, and reciting verses in honour of his name, please not God so well, as the imitation of him does advantage to us; and a devout imitator pleases the spouse better than an idle panegyric[e]." Let your work be like his, your duty in imitation of his precept and example, and then sing praises as you list; no heart is large enough, no voice pleasant enough, no life long enough, nothing but an eternity of duration and a beatifical state can do it well: and therefore holy David joins them both: "Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me; and to him, that ordereth his conversation aright, I will shew the salvation of God[f]." All thanks and praise, without

[e] Serm. 1. de Assumpt. Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων, πυρὸς τροφή· καὶ ἀναθήματα, ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία. Τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαρκῶς ἠδρασμένον, συνάπτει Θεῷ. — *Hierocl. Needh.* p. 24.

[f] Psalm l. 23.

a right-ordered conversation, are but the echo of religion, a voice and no substance; but if those praises be sung by a heart righteous and obedient, that is, singing with the spirit and singing with understanding, that is the music God delights in.

18. Sixthly: But let me observe and press this caution: It is a mistake, and not a little dangerous, when people, religious and forward, shall too promptly, frequently, and nearly, spend their thoughts in consideration of Divine excellencies. God hath shewn thee merit enough to spend all thy stock of love upon him in the characters of his power, the book of the creature, the great tables of his mercy, and the lines of his justice; we have cause enough to praise his excellencies in what we feel of him, and are refreshed with his influence, and see his beauties in reflection, though we do not put our eyes out with staring upon his face. To behold the glories and perfections of God with a more direct intuition, is the privilege of angels, who yet cover their faces in the brightness of his presence: it is only permitted to us to consider the back parts of God. And, therefore, those speculations are too bold and imprudent addresses, and minister to danger more than to religion, when we pass away from the direct studies of virtue, and those thoughts of God, which are the freer and safer communications of the Deity, which are the means of intercourse and relation between him and us, to those considerations concerning God which are metaphysical and remote, the formal objects of adoration and wonder, rather than of virtue and temperate discourses: for God in Scripture never revealed any of his abstracted perfections and remoter and mysterious distances, but with a purpose to produce fear in us, and therefore to chide the temerity and boldness of too familiar and nearer intercourse.

19. True it is, that every thing we see or can consider, represents some perfections of God; but this I mean, that no man should consider too much, and meditate too frequently, upon the immediate perfections of God, as it were by way of intuition, but as they are manifested in the creatures and in the ministries of virtue: and also, whenever God's perfections be the matter of meditation, we should not ascend upwards into him, but descend upon ourselves, like fruitful vapours drawn up into a cloud, descending speedily into a shower,

that the effect of the consideration be a design of good life; and that our loves to God be not spent in abstractions, but in good works and humble obedience. The other kind of love may deceive us; and therefore so may such kind of considerations, which are its instrument. But this I am now more particularly to consider.

20. For beyond this I have described, there is a degree of meditation so exalted, that it changes the very name, and is called contemplation; and it is in the unitive way of religion, that is, it consists in unions and adherences to God; it is a prayer of quietness and silence, and a meditation extraordinary, a discourse without variety, a vision and intuition of Divine excellencies, an immediate entry into an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetnesses, affections, and starings upon the Divine beauty; and is carried on to ecstacies, raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and apprehensions beatifical. In all the course of virtuous meditation, the soul is like a virgin, invited to make a matrimonial contract; it inquires the condition of the person, his estate and disposition, and other circumstances of amability and desire: but when she is satisfied with these inquiries, and hath chosen her husband, she no more considers particulars, but is moved by his voice and his gesture, and runs to his entertainment and fruition, and spends herself wholly in affections, not to obtain, but enjoy his love.

Thus it is said.

21. But this is a thing not to be discoursed of, but felt: and although, in other sciences, the terms must first be known, and then the rules and conclusions scientifical; here it is otherwise: for first, the whole experience of this must be obtained, before we can so much as know what it is; and the end must be acquired first, the conclusion before the premises. They that pretend to these heights, call them the secrets of the kingdom; but they are such, which no man can describe; such, which God hath not revealed in the publication of the Gospel; such, for the acquiring of which there are no means prescribed, and to which no man is obliged, and which are not in any man's power to obtain; nor such, which it is lawful to pray for or desire; nor concerning which we shall ever be called to an account.

22. Indeed, when persons have been long softened with

the continual droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impression by the assiduity of prayer, and perpetual alarms of death, and the continual dyings of mortification; the fancy, which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm, and in a disposition and aptitude to take fire, and to flame out in great ascents: and when they suffer transportations beyond the burdens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what, and call it what they please; and other pious people, that hear talk of it, admire that devotion, which is so eminent and beatified; (for so they esteem it,) and so they come to be called raptures and ecstacies, which, even amongst the apostles, were so seldom, that they were never spoken of; for those visions, raptures, and intuitions of St. Stephen, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, were not pretended to be of this kind[g]; not excesses of religion, but prophetical and intuitive revelations, to great and significant purposes, such as may be and are described in story; but these other cannot: for so Cassian reports, and commends a saying of Antony the Eremite, "That is not a perfect prayer, in which the votary does either understand himself or the prayer;" meaning, that persons eminently religious were "divina patientes," as Dionysius Areopagita said of his master Hierotheus, patics in devotion, suffering ravishments of senses[h], transported beyond the uses of humanity, into the suburbs of beatifical apprehensions: but whether or no this be any thing besides a too intense and indiscreet pressure of the faculties of the soul to inconveniences of understanding, or else a credulous, busy, and untamed fancy, they, that think best of it, cannot give a cer-

[g] Acts, x. 10. ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔκστασις, and chap. xi. 5. καὶ εἶδον ἐν ἐκστάσει ὅραμα. Raptus vidit visionem, dum oraverat.

——————— Mentemque priorem
Expulit, atque hominem toto sibi cedere jussit
Pectore.—*Quod de Apolline dixit Lucanus*, v. 168.

Qualis erat visio sive ecstasis Balaami, qui visionem Omnipotentis vidit, excidens, sed retectis oculis.—Num. xxiv. 4, 16.

[h] Μανίας δέ γε εἴδη δύο· ἡ μὲν ὑπὸ νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, ἡ δὲ ὑπὸ θείας ἐξαλλαγῆς.—*Plato in Phædr.* c. 48. ed. Ast. p. 42.

Τῆς δὲ θείας τεττάρων θεῶν τέτταρα μέρη διελόμενοι, μαντικὴν μὲν ἐπέπεσεν Ἀπόλλωνος θέντες, Διονύσου δὲ τελεστικήν, Μουσῶν δ' αὖ ποιητικὴν, τετάρτην Ἔρωτος, &c.—*Ibid.*

Ἔγνων οὖν αὖ περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῦτο· ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν, ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ, καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες, ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν, ὧν λέγουσι.—*Plato in Apol.* c. 7. p. 88. ed. Fischer.

tainty. There are, and have been, some religious, who have acted madness, and pretended inspirations; and when these are destitute of a prophetic spirit, if they resolve to serve themselves upon the pretences of it, they are disposed to the imitation, if not to the sufferings, of madness; and it would be a great folly to call such "Dei plenos," full of God, who are no better than fantastic and mad people.

23. This we are sure of, that many illusions have come in the likeness of visions, and absurd fancies under the pretence of raptures; and what some have called the spirit of prophecy, hath been the spirit of lying; and contemplation hath been nothing but melancholy and unnatural lengths; and stillness of prayer hath been a mere dream and hypochondriacal devotion, and hath ended in pride or despair, or some sottish and dangerous temptation. It is reported of Heron, the monk, that having lived a retired, mortified, and religious life, for many years together, at last he came to that habit of austerity or singularity, that he refused the festival refection and freer meals of Easter, and other solemnities, that he might do more eminently than the rest, and spend his time in greater abstractions and contemplations; but the devil, taking advantage of the weakness of his melancholy and unsettled spirit, gave him a transportation and an ecstacy, in which he fancied himself to have attained so great perfection, that he was as dear to God as a crowned martyr, and angels would be his security for indemnity, though he threw himself to the bottom of a well. He obeyed his fancy and temptation, did so, bruised himself to death, and died possessed with a persuasion of the verity of that ecstacy and transportation.

24. I will not say, that all violences and extravagances of a religious fancy are illusions; but I say, that they are all unnatural, not hallowed by the warrant of a revelation, nothing reasonable, nothing secure. I am not sure, that they ever consist with humility; but it is confessed, that they are often produced by self-love, arrogancy, and the great opinion others have of us. I will not judge the condition of those persons, who are said to have suffered these extraordinaries; for I know not the circumstances, or causes, or attendants, or the effects, or whether the stories be true that make report of them; but I shall only advise, that we

follow the intimation of our blessed Saviour, that "we sit down in the lowest place, till the master of the feast comes, and bids us sit up higher." If we entertain the inward man in the purgative and illuminative way, that is, in actions of repentance, virtue, and precise duty, that is the surest way of uniting us to God, whilst it is done by faith and obedience; and that also is love; and in these peace and safety dwell. And after we have done our work, it is not discretion in a servant to hasten to his meal, and snatch at the refreshment of visions, unions, and abstractions; but first we must gird ourselves, and wait upon the master, and not sit down ourselves, till we all be called at the great supper of the Lamb.

25. It was, therefore, an excellent desire of St. Bernard, who was as likely as any to have such altitudes of speculation, if God had really dispensed them to persons holy, fantastic, and religious: "I pray God grant to me peace of spirit, joy in the Holy Ghost, to compassionate others in the midst of my mirth, to be charitable in simplicity, to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to mourn with them that mourn; and with these I shall be content: other exaltations of devotion I leave to apostles and apostolic men; the high hills are for the harts and the climbing goats; the stony rocks, and the recesses of the earth, for the conies." It is more healthful and nutritive to dig the earth, and to eat of her fruits, than to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens, and live upon the beams of the sun: so unsatisfying a thing is rapture and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre. If ever a man be more in love with God by such instruments, or more endeared to virtue, or made more severe and watchful in his repentance, it is an excellent grace and gift of God; but then this is nothing but the joys and comfort of ordinary meditation: those extraordinary, as they have no sense in them, so are not pretended to be instruments of virtue, but are, like Jonathan's arrows, shot beyond it, to signify the danger the man is in, towards whom such arrows are shot. But if the person be made unquiet, inconstant, proud, pusillanimous, of high opinion, pertinacious, and confident in uncertain judgments, or desperate, it is certain they are temptations and illusions:

so that, as all our duty consists in the ways of repentance and acquist of virtue; so there rests all our safety, and, by consequence, all our solid joys; and this is the effect of ordinary, pious, and regular meditations.

26. If I mistake not, there is a temptation like this, under another name, amongst persons whose religion hath less discourse and more fancy, and that is a familiarity with God; which, indeed, if it were rightly understood, is an affection consequent to the illuminative way; that is, an act or an effect of the virtue of religion and devotion, which consists in prayers and addresses to God, lauds, and eucharists, and hymns, and confidence of coming to the throne of grace, upon assurance of God's veracity and goodness infinite: so that familiarity with God, which is an affection of friendship, is the intercourse of giving and receiving blessings and graces respectively; and it is produced by a holy life, or the being in the state of grace, and is part of every man's inheritance, that is a friend of God. But when familiarity with God shall be esteemed a privilege of singular and eminent persons, not communicated to all the faithful, and is thought to be an admission to a nearer intercourse of secrecy with God, it is an effect of pride, and a mistake in judgment concerning the very same thing, which the old divines call the unitive way, if themselves that claim it understood the terms of art, and the consequents of their own intentions.

27. Only I shall observe one circumstance: That familiarity with God is nothing else but an admission to be of God's family, the admission of a servant, or a son in minority, and implies obedience, duty, and fear on our parts; care and providence, and love on God's part: and it is not the familiarity of sons, but the impudence of proud equals, to express this pretended privilege in even, unmannerly, and irreverent addresses and discourses: and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. The highest flames are the most tremulous; and so are the most holy and eminent religious persons more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility: so that, in true divinity and right speaking, there is no such thing as the unitive way of religion, save only in the effects of duty, obe-

dience, and the expresses of the precise virtue of religion. Meditations in order to a good life, let them be as exalted as the capacity of the person and subject will endure, up to the height of contemplation; but if contemplation comes to be a distinct thing, and something besides or beyond a distinct degree of virtuous meditation, it is lost to all sense, and religion, and prudence. Let no man be hasty to eat of the fruits of paradise, before his time.'

28. And now I shall not need to enumerate the blessed fruits of holy meditation; for it is a grace, that is instrumental to all effects, to the production of all virtues, and the extinction of all vices; and, by consequence, the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost within us is the natural or proper emanation from the frequent exercise of this duty; only it hath something particularly excellent, besides its general influence: for meditation is that part of prayer, which knits the soul to its right object, and confirms and makes actual our intention and devotion. Meditation is the tongue of the soul, and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation, and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect; meditation being the soul of prayer, and the intention of our spirit. But, in all other things, meditation is the instrument and conveyance; it habituates our affections to heaven, it hath permanent content, it produces constancy of purpose, despising of things below, inflamed desires of virtue, love of God, self-denial, humility of understanding, and universal correction of our life and manners.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and eternal Jesus, whose whole life and doctrine was a perpetual sermon of holy life, a treasure of wisdom, and a repository of Divine materials for meditation; give me grace to understand, diligence and attention to consider, care to lay up, and carefulness to reduce to practice, all those actions, discourses, and pious lessons, and intimations, by which thou didst expressly teach, or tacitly imply, or mysteriously signify, our duty. Let my understanding become as spiritual in its employment and purposes, as it is immaterial in its nature; fill my memory, as a vessel of

election, with remembrances and notions highly compunctive, and greatly incentive of all the parts of sanctity. Let thy Holy Spirit dwell in my soul, instructing my knowledge, sanctifying my thoughts, guiding my affections, directing my will in the choice of virtue; that it may be the great employment of my life to meditate in thy law, to study thy preceptive will, to understand even the niceties and circumstantials of my duty; that ignorance may neither occasion a sin, nor become a punishment. Take from me all vanity of spirit, lightness of fancy, curiosity and impertinency of inquiry, illusions of the devil, and fantastic deceptions: let my thoughts be as my religion, plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent, and charitable; of great employment and force to the production of virtues and extermination of vice; but suffering no transportations of sense and vanity, nothing greater than the capacities of my soul, nothing that may minister to any intemperances of spirit; but let me be wholly inebriated with love; and that love wholly spent in doing such actions, as best please thee, in the conditions of my infirmity and the securities of humility, till thou shalt please to draw the curtain, and reveal thy interior beauties, in the kingdom of thine eternal glories: which grant, for thy mercy's sake, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

SECTION VI.

Of the Death of the Holy Innocents, or the Babes of Bethlehem, and the Flight of Jesus into Egypt.

1. ALL this while Herod waited for the return of the wise men, that they might give directions, where the child did lie, and his sword might find him out, with a certain and direct execution. But "when he saw, that he was mocked of the wise men, he was exceeding wroth." For it now began to deserve his trouble, when his purposes, which were most secret, began to be contradicted and diverted with a prevention, as if they were resisted by an all-seeing and almighty Providence. He began to suspect, the hand of Heaven was in it; and saw, there was nothing for his purposes to be

acted; unless he could dissolve the golden chain of predestination. Herod believed the Divine oracles, foretelling that a king should be born in Bethlehem; and yet his ambition had made him so stupid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of Heaven. For, if he did not believe the prophecies, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how could he possibly hinder that event, which God had foretold, himself would certainly bring to pass?

2. And, therefore, since God already had hindered him from the executions of a distinguishing sword, he resolved to send a sword of indiscrimination and confusion; hoping, that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young king's reign also should soon determine. He, therefore, "sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." For this execution was in the beginning of the second year after Christ's nativity, as in all probability we guess[a]; not at the two years' end, as some suppose: because as his malice was subtle, so he intended, it should be secure; and though he had been diligent in his inquiry, and was near the time in his computation, yet he, that was never sparing of the lives of others, would now, to secure his kingdom, rather overact his severity for some months, than, by doing execution but just to the tittle of his account, hazard the escaping of the Messias.

3. This execution was sad, cruel, and universal: no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the mothers, no tender-hearted soldier was employed, no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes and pity-begging looks of those mothers, that wondered, how it was possible any person should hurt their pretty sucklings; no connivances there, no protections, or friendships, or considerations, or indulgences; but Herod caused, that his own child, which was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem, should bleed to death: which made Augustus Cæsar to say, that, "in Herod's house, it were better to be a hog than a child[b];" because the custom of the nation did secure a hog from Herod's knife, but

[a] Sic ait Glossa ordinaria; sed Onuphrius in Fastis ait hanc cædem biennio post Christum natum contigisse.

[b] Macrob. Saturnal. lib. ii. c. 4.

no religion could secure his child. The sword, being thus made sharp by Herod's commission, killed fourteen thousand pretty babes; as the Greeks, in their calendar, and the Abyssines of Ethiopia, do commemorate in their offices of liturgy. For Herod, crafty and malicious, that is, perfectly tyrant[c], had caused all the children to be gathered together; which the credulous mothers, (supposing it had been to take account of their age and number, in order to some taxing,) hindered not, but unwittingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery.

4. "Then was fulfilled that, which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted." All the synonymas of sadness were little enough to express this great weeping, when fourteen thousand mothers, in one day, saw their pretty babes, pouring forth their blood into that bosom, whence, not long before, they had sucked milk; and, instead of those pretty smiles, which use to entertain the fancy and dear affections of their mothers, nothing but affrighting shrieks, and then ghastly looks. The mourning was great, like "the mourning in the valley of Hinnom, and there was no comforter;" their sorrow was too big to be cured, till it should lie down alone, and rest with its own weariness.

5. But the malice of Herod went also into the hill country; and hearing, that of John, the son of Zacharias, great things were spoken, by which he was designed to a great ministry about this young prince, he attempted in him also to rescind the prophecies, and sent a messenger of death towards him; but the mother's care had been early with him, and sent him into desert places, where he continued till the time appointed "of his manifestation unto Israel." But, as the children of Bethlehem died in the place of Christ, so did the father of the Baptist die for his child. For "Herod slew Zacharias between the temple and the altar," because he refused to betray his son to the fury

[c] Qualis apud Lucianum describitur Tyrannicid. Ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ τὴν φρουρὰν κρατύνων, ὁ τοὺς τυραννουμένους ἐκκόπτων, ὁ τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύοντας φοβῶν, ὁ τοὺς ἐφήβους ἀνασπῶν, ὁ ἐνυβρίζων τοῖς γάμοις· ἐκείνῳ αἱ παρθένοι ἀνήγοντο· καὶ εἴ τινες σφαγαὶ, καὶ εἴ τινες φυγαὶ, καὶ χρημάτων ἀφαιρέσεις, καὶ βάσανοι, καὶ ὕβρεις, &c.—*Bipont.* vol. iv. p. 311.

of that rabid bear[d]. Though some persons, very eminent amongst the stars of the primitive church, report a tradition[e], that a place being separated in the temple for virgins, Zacharias suffered the mother of our Lord to abide there after the birth of her holy Son, affirming her still to be a virgin; and that for this reason, not Herod, but the scribes and pharisees, did kill Zacharias.

6. Tertullian reports[f], that the blood of Zacharias had so besmeared the stones of the pavement, which was the altar, on which the good old priest was sacrificed, that no art or industry could wash the tincture out, the dye and guilt being both indelible; as if, because God did intend to exact of that nation "all the blood of righteous persons, from Abel to Zacharias," who was the last of the martyrs of the synagogue, he would leave a character of their guilt in their eyes, to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty, and infidelity. Some there are, who affirm these words of our blessed Saviour not to relate to any Zacharias, who had been already slain; but to be a prophecy of the last of all the martyrs of the Jews, who should be slain immediately before the destruction of the last temple, and the dissolution of the nation. Certain it is, that such a Zacharias, the son of Baruch, (if we may believe Josephus[g],) was slain, in the middle of the temple, a little before it was destroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophecy and reproof here made by our blessed Saviour, that, (from Abel to Zacharias,) should take in "all the righteous blood" from first to last, till the iniquity was complete; and it is not imaginable, that the blood of our blessed Lord, and of St. James their bishop, (for whose death, many of themselves thought, God destroyed their city,) should be left out of the account, which yet would certainly be left out, if any other Zacharias should be meant, than he, whom they last slew: and in proportion to this, Cyprian de Valera expounds that, which we read in the past tense, to signify the future, "ye slew," i. e. "shall slay;" according to the style often used by prophets, and as the aorist of an uncertain signification will bear. But the first great instance of the

[d] Sic Chrysost. et Petrus Martyr. episc. Alexandr. Niceph. et Cedrenus.

[e] Sic aiunt Origen. tract. 23. in Evang. Matth. S. Basil. Homil. de Humana Christi Generatione. Nyssen. in Natali Christi. Cyril. adv. Anthropomorphitas.

[f] In Scorpiaco, cap. 8. [g] Lib. iv.

Divine vengeance for these executions, was upon Herod, who, in very few years after, was smitten of God with so many plagues and tortures, that himself alone seemed like an hospital of the incurabili: for he was tormented with a soft slow fire, like that of burning iron or the cinders of yew, in his body; in his bowels, with intolerable colics and ulcers; in his natural parts, with worms; in his feet, with gout; in his nerves, with convulsions, difficulty of breathing; and out of divers parts of his body issued out so impure and ulcerous a steam, that the loathsomeness, pain, and indignation, made him once to snatch a knife, with purpose to have killed himself; but that he was prevented by a nephew of his, that stood there in his attendance.

7. But as the flesh of beasts grows callous by stripes and the pressure of the yoke; so did the heart of Herod, by the loads of Divine vengeance. God began his hell here; and the pains of hell never made any man less impious: for Herod, perceiving that he must now die[h], first put to death his son Antipater, under pretence, that he would have poisoned him; and that the last scene of his life might, for pure malice and exalted spite, outdo all the rest, because he believed the Jewish nation would rejoice at his death, he assembled all the nobles of the people, and put them in prison, giving in charge to his sister Salome, that, when he was expiring his last, all the nobility should be slain, that his death might be lamented with a perfect and universal sorrow.

8. But God, that brings to nought the counsels of wicked princes, turned the design against the intendment of Herod; for when he was dead, and could not call his sister to account for disobeying his most bloody and unrighteous commands, she released all the imprisoned and despairing gentlemen, and made the day of her brother's death a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, such as was that, when the nation was delivered from the violence of Haman, in the days of Purim.

9. And, all this while, God had provided a sanctuary for the holy child, Jesus. For God, seeing the secret purposes of blood, which Herod had, sent his angel[i], "who appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young

[h] Δειναὶ γὰρ καὶ κοῖται ἀποιχομένοιο λέοντος.

[i] Matth. ii. 13.

Child and his mother, and fly into Egypt, and be thou there, until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child, to destroy him. Then he arose, and took the young Child and his mother, by night, and departed into Egypt." And they made their first abode in Hermopolis[k], in the country of Thebais; whither, when they first arrived, the child Jesus, being by design or providence carried into a temple, all the statues of the idol-gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark, and suffered their timely and just dissolution and dishonour, according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, the Lord shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence[l]." And in the life of the prophet Jeremy, written by Epiphanius, it is reported, "that he told the Egyptian priests, that then their idols should be broken in pieces, when a holy virgin, with her child, should enter into their country:" which prophecy possibly might be the cause, that the Egyptians did, besides their vanities, worship also an infant in a manger, and a virgin in her bed.

10. From Hermopolis to Maturea went these holy pilgrims, in pursuance of their safety and provisions; where, it was reported, they dwelt in a garden of balsam, till Joseph, being, at the end of seven years, (as it is commonly believed,) ascertained by an angel of the death of Herod, and commanded to return to the land of Israel, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and returned. But hearing that Archelaus did reign in the place of his father, and knowing that the cruelty and ambition of Herod was hereditary, or entailed upon Archelaus, being also warned to turn aside into the parts of Galilee, which was of a distinct jurisdiction, governed indeed by one of Herod's sons, but not by Archelaus, thither he diverted; and there that holy family remained in the city of Nazareth, whence the holy Child had the appellative of a Nazarene.

[k] Euseb. de Demonstr. c. 20. S. Athanas. lib. de Incarnat. Verbi. Palladius in Vita S. Apollon.

[l] Isa. xix. 1. Dorotheus in Synopsi. Pallad. in Vita Apollon.

Ad SECTION VI.

Considerations upon the Death of the Innocents, and the Flight of the Holy Jesus into Egypt.

1. HEROD, having called the wise men, and received information of their design, and the circumstances of the child, pretended religion too, and desired them to bring him word, when they had found the babe, " that he might come and worship him;" meaning to make a sacrifice of him, to whom he should pay his adoration; and, instead of investing the young Prince with a royal purple, he would have stained his swaddling-bands with his blood. It is ever dangerous, when a wicked prince pretends religion; his design is then foulest, by how much it needs to put on a fairer outside; but it was an early policy in the world, and it concerned men's interests to seem religious, when they thought, that to be so was an abatement of great designs. When Jezebel designed the robbing and destroying Naboth, she sent to the elders to proclaim a fast; for the external and visible remonstrances of religion leave in the spirits of men a great reputation of the seeming person, and therefore they will not rush into a furious sentence against his actions, at least not judge them with prejudice against the man, towards whom they are so fairly prepared, but do some violence to their own understanding, and either disbelieve their own reason, or excuse the fact, or think it but an error, or a less crime, or the incidences of humanity; or, however, are so long in decreeing against him, whom they think to be religious, that the rumour is abated, or the stream of indignation is diverted by other laborious arts, intervening before our zeal is kindled; and so the person is unjudged, or, at least, the design secured.

2. But in this, human policy was exceedingly infatuated: and though Herod had trusted his design to no keeper but himself, and had pretended fair, having religion for the word, and " called the wise men privately," and intrusted them with no employment but a civil request, an account of the success of their journey, which they had no reason, or desire, to conceal; yet his heart was opened to the eye of Heaven, and the sun was not more visible, than his dark purpose was

to God; and it succeeded accordingly: the Child was sent away, the wise men warned not to return, Herod was mocked and enraged; and so his craft became foolish and vain: and so are all counsels intended against God, or any thing, of which he himself hath undertaken the protection. For, although we understand not the reasons of security, because we see not that admirable concentring of infinite things in the Divine Providence, whereby God brings his purposes to act by ways unlooked for, and sometimes contradictory; yet the public and perpetual experience of the world hath given continual demonstrations, that all evil counsels have come to nought; that the succeeding of an impious design is no argument, that the man is prosperous; that the curse is then surest, when his fortune spreads the largest; that the contradiction and impossibilities of deliverance to pious persons are but an opportunity and engagement for God to do wonders, and to glorify his power, and to exalt his mercy, by the instances of miraculous or extraordinary events. And as the afflictions, happening to good men, are alleviated by the support of God's good Spirit; and enduring them here, are but consignations to an honourable amends hereafter: so the succeeding prosperities of fortunate impiety, when they meet with punishment in the next, or in the third age, or in the deletion of a people five ages after, are the greatest arguments of God's providence, who keeps wrath in store, and forgets not to "do judgment for all them, that are oppressed with wrong." It was laid up with God, and was perpetually in his eye, being the matter of a lasting, durable, and unremitted anger.

3. But God had care of the holy Child; he sent his angel to warn Joseph, with the Babe and his mother, to fly into Egypt. Joseph and Mary instantly arise; and without inquiry, how they shall live there, or when they shall return, or how be secured, or what accommodations they shall have in their journey, at the same hour of the night, begin the pilgrimage with the cheerfulness of obedience, and the securities of faith, and the confidence of hope, and the joys of love, knowing themselves to be recompensed for all the trouble they could endure; that they were instruments of the safety of the holy Jesus; that they then were serving God; that they were encircled with the securities of the Divine

Providence: and, in these dispositions, all places were alike; for every region was a paradise, where they were in company with Jesus. And, indeed, that man wants many degrees of faith and prudence, who is solicitous for the support of his necessities, when he is doing the commandment of God[a]. If he commands thee to offer a sacrifice, himself will provide a lamb, or enable thee to find one; and he would remove thee into a state of separation, where thy body needs no supplies of provision, if he meant thou shouldest serve him without provisions. He will certainly take away thy need, or satisfy it[b]; he will feed thee himself, as he did the Israelites; or take away thy hunger, as he did to Moses; or send ravens to feed thee, as he did to Elias; or make charitable people minister to thee, as the widow to Elisha; or give thee his own portion, as he maintained the Levites; or make thine enemies to pity thee, as the Assyrians did the captive Jews. For whatsoever the world hath, and whatsoever can be conveyed by wonder or by providence, all that is thy security for provisions, so long as thou doest the work of God. And remember, that the assurance of blessing, and health, and salvation, is not made by doing what we list, or being where we desire, but by doing God's will, and being in the place of his appointment. We may be safe in Egypt, if we be there in obedience to God; and we may perish among the babes of Bethlehem, if we be there by our own election.

4. Joseph and Mary did not argue against the angel's message, because they had a confidence of their charge, who, with the breath of his mouth, could have destroyed Herod, though he had been abetted with all the legions, marching under the Roman eagles; but they, like the two cherubims about the propitiatory, took the child between them, and fled, giving way to the fury of persecution, which possibly, when the materials are withdrawn, might expire, and die like fire, which else would rage for ever. Jesus fled, undertook a sad journey, in which the roughness of the ways, his own tenderness, the youth of his mother, the old age of his supposed father, the smallness of their viaticum and accommodation for their voyage, the no-kindred they were to go to,

[a] ——— τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχων τις ἂν φίλους, ἐξέστην μαντικὴν ἔχειν δόμοις.
Eurip. Helenâ. 766.

[b] Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

hopeless of comforts and exterior supplies, were so many circumstances of poverty, and lesser strokes of the persecution; things, that himself did choose to demonstrate the verity of his nature, the infirmity of his person, the humility of his spirit, the austerity of his undertaking, the burden of his charge; and by which he did teach us the same virtues, he then expressed, and also consigned this permission to all his disciples, in future ages, that they also may fly from their persecutors, when the case is so, that their work is not done; that is, they may glorify God with their lives, more than with their death. And of this they are ascertained by the arguments of prudent account: for sometimes we are called to glorify God by dying, and the interest of the church and the faith of many may be concerned in it; then we must abide by it. In other cases it is true, that Demosthenes said, in apology for his own escaping from a lost field, "A man that runs away, may fight again[c]." And St. Paul made use of a guard of soldiers, to rescue him from the treachery of the Jewish rulers; and of a basket, to escape from the inquisition of the governor of Damascus; and the primitive Christians, of grots and subterraneous retirements; and St. Athanasius, of a fair lady's house; and others, of deserts and graves; as knowing it was no shame to fly, when their Master himself had fled, that his time and his work might be fulfilled; and, when it was, he then laid his life down.

5. It is hard to set down particular rules, that may indefinitely guide all persons, in the stating of their own case; because all things, that depend upon circumstances, are alterable unto infinite. But as God's glory and the good of the church are the great considerations to be carried before us all the way, and in proportions to them we are to determine and judge our questions; so also our infirmities are allowable in the scrutiny: for I doubt not, but God intended it a mercy, and a compliance with human weakness, when he gave us this permission, as well as it was a design to secure the opportunities of his service, and the consummation of his own work by us. And since our fears, and the incommodities of flight, and the sadness of exile, and the insecurities and inconveniences of a strange and new abode, are part of

[c] Ἀνὴρ ὁ φεύγων καὶ πάλιν μαχήσεται.

the persecution; provided that God's glory be not certainly and apparently neglected, nor the church evidently scandalized by our flight; all interpretations of the question in favour of ourselves, and the declension of that part, which may tempt us to apostacy, or hazard our confidence, and the choosing the lesser part of the persecution, is not against the rule of faith, and always hath in it less glory, but oftentimes more security.

6. But thus far Herod's ambition transported him, even to resolutions of murder of the highest person, the most glorious and the most innocent upon earth; and it represents that passion to be the most troublesome and vexatious thing, that can afflict the sons of men. Virtue hath not half so much trouble in it; it sleeps quietly, without startings and affrighting fancies; it looks cheerfully; smiles with much serenity; and, though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehensions of some faculty; it fears no man, nor no thing, nor is it discomposed; and hath no concernments in the great alterations of the world, and entertains death like a friend, and reckons the issues of it as the greatest of its hopes: but ambition is full of distractions; it teems with stratagems, as Rebecca with struggling twins; and is swelled with expectation, as with a tympany; and sleeps sometimes, as the wind in a storm, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast, till the cordage of his heart-strings crack; fears, when none is nigh; and prevents things, which never had intention; and falls under the inevitability of such accidents, which either could not be foreseen, or not prevented. It is an infinite labour to make a man's self miserable; and the utmost acquist is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his days full of sorrow, to enjoy the troubles of a three years' reign; for Herod lived but three years, or five at the most, after the flight of Jesus into Egypt. And therefore there is no greater unreasonableness in the world, than in the designs of ambition: for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublesome, and discontent, for the uncertain acquist of an honour, which nothing can secure; and, besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty than our life; and, when we are dead, all the world sees, who was the fool. But it is a strange caitiveness

and baseness of disposition of men, so furiously and unsatiably to run after perishing and uncertain interests, in defiance of all the reason and religion of the world; and yet to have no appetite to such excellences, which satisfy reason, and content the spirit, and create great hopes, and ennoble our expectation, and are advantages to communities of men and public societies, and which all wise men teach, and all religion commands.

7. And it is not amiss to observe, how Herod vexed himself extremely upon a mistake[d]. The child Jesus was born a King, but it was a King of all the world; not confined within the limits of a province, like the weaker beauties of a torch, to shine in one room; but, like the sun, his empire was over all the world; and if Herod would have become but his tributary, and paid him the acknowledgments of his Lord, he should have had better conditions than under Cæsar, and yet have been as absolute in his own Jewry as he was before[e]: "His kingdom was not of this world;" and he, that gives heavenly kingdoms to all his servants, would not have stooped to have taken up Herod's petty coronet. But as it is a very vanity, which ambition seeks, so it is a shadow, that disturbs and discomposes all its motions and apprehensions.

8. And the same mistake caused calamities to descend upon the church; for some of the persecutions commenced upon pretence, Christianity was an enemy to government: but the pretence was infinitely unreasonable, and therefore had the fate of senseless allegations, it disbanded presently; for no external accident did so incorporate the excellency of Christ's religion into the hearts of men, as the innocency of the men, their inoffensive deportment, the modesty of their designs, their great humility and obedience, a life expressly in enmity and contestation against secular ambition. And it is to be feared, that the mingling human interests with religion, will deface the image Christ hath stamped upon it.

[d] Dubia pro certis solent timere reges.— *Senec. Œdip.* 700.

[e] Hostis Herodes impie,
Christum venire quid times?
Non auferet terrestria,
Qui regna dat cœlestia.

Qui sceptra duro sævus imperio regit,
Timet timentes, metus in authorem cadit.— *Senec. Œdip.* 705.

Certain it is, the metal is much abated by so impure alloy, while the Christian prince serves his end of ambition, and bears arms upon his neighbour's country, for the service of religion, making Christ's kingdom to invade Herod's rights: and, in the state ecclesiastical, secular interests have so deep a portion, that there are snares laid to tempt a persecution, and men are invited to sacrilege[f], while the revenues of a church are a fair fortune for a prince. I make no scruple to find fault with painters, that picture the poor saints with rich garments; for, though they deserved better, yet they had but poor ones: and some have been tempted to cheat the saint, not out of ill-will to his sanctity, but love to his shrine, and to the beauty of the clothes, with which some imprudent persons have, of old time, dressed their images. So it is in the fate of the church; persecution and the robes of Christ were her portion and her clothing; and when she is dressed up in gawdy fortunes, it is no more than she deserves; but yet sometimes it is occasion, that the devil cheats her of her holiness, and the men of the world sacrilegiously cheat her of her riches: and then, when God hath reduced her to that poverty, he first promised and intended to her, the persecution ceases, and sanctity returns, and God curses the sacrilege, and stirs up men's minds to religious donatives; and all is well, till she grows rich again. And if it be dangerous in any man to be rich, and discomposes his steps in his journey to eternity; it is not then so proportionable to the analogy of Christ's poverty, and the inheritance of the church, to be sedulous in acquiring great temporalities, and putting princes in jealousy, and states into care for securities, lest all the temporal should run into ecclesiastical possession.

9. If the church have, by the active piety of a credulous, a pious, and less observant age, been endowed with great possessions, she hath rules enough, and poor enough, and necessities enough to dispend, what she hath, with advantages to religion: but then all she gets by it is, the trouble of an unthankful, a suspected, and unsatisfying dispensation; and the church is made, by evil persons, a scene of ambition

[f] Καὶ ἡ τῶν περισφῳζομένων ἀπολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυσιολέται ἀφρόνων, πυρὸς τροφὴ· καὶ ἀναθέματα, ἱερούλοις χορηγία. τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαφανῶς ἡδιερμήνευσε, συνέπεσθαι Θεῷ.—*Hierocl.*

and stratagems[s]; and to get a German bishoprick is to be a prince; and to defend with niceness and suits of law every custom or lesser rite, even to the breach of charity and the scandal of religion, is called a duty: and every single person is bound to forgive injuries, and to quit his right rather than his charity; but if it is not a duty in the church also, in them, whose life should be excellent to the degree of example, I would fain know, if there be not greater care taken to secure the ecclesiastical revenue, than the public charity and the honour of religion in the strict piety of the clergy; for as the not engaging in suits may occasion bold people to wrong the church, so the necessity of engaging is occasion of losing charity, and of great scandal. I find not fault with a free revenue of the church; it is, in some sense, necessary to governors, and to preserve the consequents of their authority: but I represent, that such things are occasion of much mischief to the church, and less holiness; and, in all cases, respect should be had to the design of Christianity, to the prophecies of Jesus, to the promised lot of the church, to the dangers of riches, to the excellencies, and advantages, and rewards of poverty; and if the church have enough to perform all her duties and obligations cheerfully, let her, of all societies, be soonest content. If she have plenty, let her use it temperately and charitably; if she have not, let her not be querulous and troublesome. But however it would be thought upon, that, though, in judging the quantum of the church's portion, the world thinks every thing too much, yet we must be careful, we do not judge every thing too little; and if our fortune be safe between envy and contempt, it is much mercy. If it be despicable, it is safe for ecclesiastics, though it may be accidentally inconvenient or less profitable to others; but if it be great, public experience hath made remonstrance, that it mingles with the world, and dirties those fingers, which are instrumental in consecration and the more solemn rites of Christianity.

[s] Vide quæ dixit Ammian. Marcell. lib. xvii.; et Epistolas S. Gregorii M. lib. iv. ep. 32, 34, 36; et lib. vi. ep. 30; lib. vii. indict. 1, ep. 30; et Concil. Africanum, quo monitus est Cælestinus papa, Ne fumosum typhum seculi in ecclesiam, quæ lucem simplicitatis et humilitatis diem Deum videre cupientibus præfert, videamur inducere.

10. Jesus fled from the persecution; as he did not stand it out, so he did not stand out against it. He was careful to transmit no precedent or encouragement of resisting tyrannous princes, when they offer violence to religion and our lives. He would not stand disputing for privileges, nor calling in auxiliaries from the Lord of Hosts, who could have spared him many legions of angels, every single spirit being able to have defeated all Herod's power; but he knew, it was a hard lesson to learn patience, and all the excuses in the world would be sought out to discourage such a doctrine, by which we are taught to die, or lose all we have, or suffer inconveniences, at the will of a tyrant: we need no authentic examples, much less doctrines, to invite men to war, from which we see Christian princes cannot be restrained with the engagements and peaceful theorems of an excellent and a holy religion, nor subjects kept from rebelling by the interests of all religions in the world, nor by the necessities and reasonableness of obedience, nor the endearments of all public societies of men; one word, or an intimation from Christ, would have sounded an alarm, and put us into postures of defence, when all Christ's excellent sermons, and rare exemplar actions, cannot tie our hands. But it is strange now, that, of all men in the world, Christians should be such fighting people, or that Christian subjects should lift up a thought against a Christian prince, when they had no intimation of encouragement from their Master, but many from him to endear obedience, and humility, and patience, and charity; and these four make up the whole analogy, and represent the chief design and meaning of Christianity, in its moral constitution.

11. But Jesus, when himself was safe, could also have secured the poor babes of Bethlehem, with thousands of diversions and avocations of Herod's purposes, or by discovering his own escape in some safe manner, not unknown to the Divine wisdom; but yet it did not so please God. He is Lord of his creatures, and hath absolute dominion over our lives, and he had an end of glory to serve upon these babes, and an end of justice upon Herod: and to the children he made such compensation, that they had no reason to complain, that they were so soon made stars, when they shone

in their little orbs and participations of eternity: for so the sense of the church[h] hath been, that they having died the death of martyrs, though incapable of making the choice, God supplied the defects of their will by his own entertainment of the thing; that as the misery and their death, so also their glorification, might have the same author in the same manner of causality, even by a peremptory and unconditioned determination in these particulars. This sense is pious, and nothing unreasonable, considering that all circumstances of the thing make the case particular; but the immature death of other infants is a sadder story: for though I have no warrant or thought, that it is ill with them after death, and, in what manner or degree of well-being it is, there is no revelation; yet I am not of opinion, that the securing of so low a condition as theirs, in all reason, is like to be, will make recompense; or is an equal blessing with the possibilities of such an eternity, as is proposed to them, who, in the use of reason and a holy life, glorify God with a free obedience; and if it were otherwise, it were no blessing to live, till the use of reason, and fools, and babes, were in the best, because in the securest, condition, and certain expectation of equal glories.

12. As soon as Herod was dead, (for the Divine vengeance waited his own time for his arrest,) the angel presently brought Joseph word. The holy family was full of content and indifferency, not solicitous for return, not distrustful of the Divine providence, full of poverty, and sanctity, and content, waiting God's time, at the return of which God delayed not to recal them from exile; "out of Egypt he called his Son," and directed Joseph's fear and course, that he should divert to a place in the jurisdiction of Philip, where the heir of Herod's cruelty, Archelaus, had nothing to do. And this very series of providence and care God expresses to all his sons by adoption; and will determine the time, and set bounds to every persecution, and punish the instruments, and ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietness to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctify it all,

[h] Ætas necdum habilis ad pugnam, idonea exstitit ad coronam; et ut appareret innocentes esse qui propter Christum necantur, infantia innocens occisa est.—*S. Cyprian.* Athenagoras dixit infantes resurrecturos, sed non venturos in judicium.

and give a crown at last, and all in his good time, if we wait the coming of the angel, and in the mean time do our duty with care, and sustain our temporals with indifferency: and, in all our troubles and displeasing accidents, we may call to mind, that God, by his holy and most reasonable providence, hath so ordered it, that the spiritual advantages we may receive from the holy use of such incommodities, are of great recompense and interest; and that, in such accidents, the holy Jesus, having gone before us in precedent, does go along with us by love and fair assistances; and that makes the present condition infinitely more eligible, than the greatest splendour of secular fortune.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal God, who didst suffer thy holy Son to fly from the violence of an enraged prince, and didst choose to defend him in the ways of his infirmity by hiding himself, and a voluntary exile; be thou a defence to all thy faithful people, whenever persecution arises against them; send them the ministry of angels to direct them into ways of security, and let thy holy Spirit guide them in the paths of sanctity, and let thy providence continue in custody over their persons, till the times of refreshment and the day of redemption shall return. Give, O Lord, to thy whole church, sanctity and zeal, and the confidences of a holy faith, boldness of confession, humility, content, and resignation of spirit, generous contempt of the world, and unmingled desires of thy glory and the edification of thy elect; that no secular interests disturb her duty, or discompose her charity, or depress her hopes, or, in any unequal degree, possess her affections, and pollute her spirit: but preserve her from the snares of the world and the devil, from the rapine and greedy desires of sacrilegious persons; and, in all conditions, whether of affluence or want, may she still promote the interests of religion: that, when plenteousness is within her palaces, and peace in her walls, that condition may then be best for her; and when she is made as naked as Jesus to his passion, then poverty may be best for her; that, in all estates, she may glorify thee; and, in all accidents and changes, thou mayest

sanctify and bless her, and at last bring her to the eternal riches and abundances of glory, where no persecution shall disturb her rest. Grant this for sweet Jesus' sake, who suffered exile and hard journeys, and all the inconveniences of a friendless person, in a strange province; to whom, with thee and the eternal Spirit, be glory for ever, and blessing in all generations of the world, and for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION VII.

Of the younger Years of Jesus, and his Disputation with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. FROM the return of this holy family to Judæa, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the blessed child Jesus was twelve years of age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentic record; but that they went to Jerusalem, every year, at the feast of the Passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old, and was in the holy city, attending upon the paschal rites and solemn sacrifices of the law, his parents, having fulfilled their days of festivity, went homeward, supposing the Child had been in the caravan, among his friends; and so they erred for the space of a whole day's journey; "and when they sought him, and found him not, they returned to Jerusalem," full of fears and sorrow.

2. No fancy can imagine the doubts, the apprehensions, the possibilities of mischief, and the tremblings of heart, which the holy Virgin-mother felt thronging about her fancy and understanding, but such a person, who hath been tempted to the danger of a violent fear and transportation, by apprehension of the loss of a hope greater than a miracle; her discourses with herself could have nothing of distrust, but much of sadness and wonder; and the indetermination of her thoughts was a trouble great as the passion of her love. Possibly an angel might have carried him, she knew not whither; or, it may be, the son of Herod had gotten the prey, which his cruel father missed; or he was sick, or detained out of curiosity and wonder, or any thing, but what was right.

And by this time she was come to Jerusalem; and having spent three days in her sad and holy pursuit of her lost jewel, despairing of the prosperous event of any human diligence, as, in all other cases, she had accustomed, she made her address to God; and entering into the temple to pray, God, that knew her desires, prevented her with the blessings of goodness; and there her sorrow was changed into joy and wonder; for there she found her holy Son, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions."

3. "And, when they saw him, they were amazed," and so were "all that heard him, at his understanding and answers;" beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common spirits of the best men, discoursing up to the height of a prophet, with the clearness of an angel, and the infallibility of inspiration: for here it was verified, in the highest and most literal signification, that, "out of the mouths of babes, God had ordained strength;" but this was the strength of argument, and science of the highest mysteries of religion and secret philosophy.

4. Glad were the parents of the Child to find him illustrated with a miracle, concerning which, when he had given them such an account, which they understood not, but yet Mary laid up in her heart, as that this was part of his employment and his Father's business, "he returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents;" where he lived in all holiness and humility, showing great signs of wisdom, endearing himself to all that beheld his conversation; did nothing less than might become the great expectation, which his miraculous birth had created of him; for "he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man," still growing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of demeanour, and excellency of understanding.

5. They, that love to serve God in hard questions, use to dispute, whether Christ did, truly, or in appearance only, increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the Word, and being the eternal wisdom of the Father, it seemed to them, that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole person, as to the Divine nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story, which equally affirms

Christ as properly to have "increased in favour with God as with man, in wisdom as in stature," they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of human nature, to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections: and, although the humanity of Christ made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications, which were imparted to his inferior nature; and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of wisdom upon the humanity for a time, as he did the beatifical vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the interval of his sad and dolorous passion. But, whether it were truly or in appearance, in habit or in exercise of act, by increase of notion or experience, it is certain the promotions of the holy Child were great, admirable, and as full of wonder as of sanctity, and sufficient to entertain the hopes and expectations of Israel with preparations and dispositions, as to satisfy their wonder for the present, so to accept him at the time of his publication; they having no reason to be scandalized at the smallness, improbability, and indifferency, of his first beginnings.

6. But the holy Child had also an employment, which he undertook in obedience to his supposed father, for exercise and example of humility, and for the support of that holy family, which was dear in the eyes of God, but not very splendid by the opulency of a free and indulgent fortune. He wrought in the trade of a carpenter; and when Joseph died, which happened before the manifestation of Jesus unto Israel, he wrought alone, and was no more called the carpenter's son, but the carpenter himself. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary[1]?" said his offended countrymen. And in this condition the blessed Jesus did abide, till he was thirty years old; for he, that came to fulfil the law, would not suffer one tittle of it to pass unaccomplished; for, by the law of the nation and custom of the religion, no priest was to officiate, or prophet was to preach, before he was thirty years of age.

[1] Mark, vi. 3.

Ad SECTION VII.

Considerations upon the Disputation of Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. JOSEPH and MARY, being returned into Nazareth, were sedulous to enjoy the privileges of their country, the opportunities of religion, the public address to God, in the rites of festivals and solemnities of the temple: they had been long grieved with the impurities and idol rites, which they, with sorrow, had observed to be done in Egypt; and, being deprived of the blessings of those holy societies and employments they used to enjoy in Palestine, at their return came to the offices of their religion with appetites of fire, and keen as the evening wolf; and all the joys, which they should have received in respersion and distinct emanations, if they had kept their anniversaries at Jerusalem, all that united they received in the duplication of their joys at their return, and in the fulfilling themselves with the refection and holy viand of religion. For so God uses to satisfy the longings of holy people, when a persecution has shut up the beautiful gates of the temple, or denied to them opportunities of access: although God hears the prayers they make with their windows towards Jerusalem, with their hearts opened with desires of the public communions, and sends them a prophet with a private meal, as Habakkuk came to Daniel; yet he fills their hearts, when the year of jubilee returns, and the people sing "In convertendo," the song of joy for their redemption. For as, of all sorrows, the deprivations and eclipses of religion are the saddest, and of the worst and most inconvenient consequence; so, in proportion, are the joys of spiritual plenty and religious returns; the communion of saints being like the primitive corban, a repository to feed all the needs of the church, or like a taper joined to a torch, itself is kindled, and increases the other's flames.

2. They failed not to go to Jerusalem: for all those holy prayers and ravishments of love, those excellent meditations and intercourses with God, their private readings and discourses, were but entertainments and satisfaction of their

necessities, they lived with them during their retirements; but it was a feast, when they went to Jerusalem, and the freer and more indulgent refection of the spirit; for, in public solemnities, God opens his treasures, and pours out his grace, more abundantly. Private devotions, and secret offices of religion, are like refreshing of a garden with the distilling and petty drops of a water-pot; but addresses to the temple, and serving God in the public communion of saints, is like rain from heaven, where the offices are described by a public spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages by the adunations and symbols of charity, and increment by their distinct title to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of public observation, and the engagements of holy customs[a]. For religion is a public virtue; it is the ligature of souls, and the great instrument of the conservation of bodies politic; and is united in a common object, the God of all the world, and is managed by public ministries, by sacrifice, adoration, and prayer, in which, with variety of circumstances indeed, but with infinite consent and union of design, all the sons of Adam are taught to worship God; and it is a publication of God's honour, its very purpose being to declare to all the world, how great things God hath done for us, whether in public donatives or private missives; so that the very design, temper, and constitution of religion, is to be a public address to God: and, although God is present in closets, and there also distils his blessings, in small rain; yet to the societies of religion and publication of worship as we are invited by the great blessings and advantages of communion, so also we are, in some proportions, more straitly limited by the analogy and exigence of the duty[b]. It is a persecution, when we are forced from public worshippings; no man can hinder our private addresses to God; every man can build a chapel in his breast, and

[a] Habet semper privilegium suum, ut sacratius fiat quod publicâ lege celebratur, quàm quod privatâ institutione dependitur. — *Leo de Jejun. 7. Mensis.* Publica præferenda sunt privatis, et tunc est efficacior sanctiorque devotio, quando in operibus pietatis totius ecclesiæ unus est animus et unus sensus. — *Idem, Serm.* 4.

[b] Heb. x. 25.

himself be the priest, and his heart the sacrifice, and every foot of glebe, he treads on, be the altar; and this no tyrant can prevent. If, then, there can be persecution in the offices of religion, it is the prohibition of public profession and communions; and therefore he, that denies to himself the opportunities of public rites and conventions, is his own persecutor.

3. But when Jesus was "twelve years old," and his parents had finished their offices, and returned filled with the pleasures of religion, they missed the Child, and "sought him amongst their kindred," but there "they found him not;" for whosoever seeks Jesus, must seek him in the offices of religion, in the temple, not amongst the engagements and pursuit of worldly interests: "I forgat also mine own Father's house," said David, the father of this holy Child; and so must we, when we run in an inquiry after the Son of David. But our relinquishing must not be a dereliction of duty, but of engagement; our affections toward kindred must always be with charity, and according to the endearments of our relation, but without immersion, and such adherences, as either contradict, or lessen, our duty towards God.

4. It was a sad effect of their pious journey, to lose the joy of their family, and the hopes of all the world: but it often happens, that, after spiritual employments, God seems to absent himself, and withdraw the sensible effects of his presence, that we may seek him with the same diligence, and care, and holy fears, with which the holy Virgin-mother sought the blessed Jesus. And it is a design of great mercy in God, to take off the light from the eyes of a holy person, that he may not be abused with complacencies, and too confident opinions and reflections, upon his fair performances. For we usually judge of the well or ill of our devotions and services, by what we feel; and we think God rewards every thing in the present, and by proportion to our own expectations; and if we feel a present rejoicing of spirit, all is well with us; the smoke of the sacrifice ascended right in a holy cloud: but if we feel nothing of comfort, then we count it a prodigy and ominous, and we suspect ourselves; and most commonly we have reason. Such irradiations of cheerfulness are always welcome; but it is not always anger, that takes them away: the cloud removed from before the camp of

Israel, and stood before the host of Pharaoh; but this was a design of ruin to the Egyptians, and of security to Israel: and, if those bright angels, that go with us to direct our journeys, remove out of our sight, and stand behind us, it is not always an argument, that the anger of the Lord is gone out against us; but such decays of sense and clouds of spirit are excellent conservators of humility, and restrain those intemperances and vainer thoughts, which we are prompted to, in the gaiety of our spirits.

5. But we often give God cause to remove, and, for a while, to absent himself; and his doing of it sometimes, upon the just provocations of our demerits, makes us, at other times, with good reason, to suspect ourselves, even in our best actions. But sometimes we are vain, or remiss; or pride invades us in the darkness and incuriousness of our spirits; and we have a secret sin, which God would have us to inquire after; and, when we suspect every thing, and condemn ourselves with strictest and most angry sentence, then, it may be, God will, with a ray of light, break through the cloud; if not, it is nothing the worse for us: for, although the visible remonstrance and face of things, in all the absences and withdrawings of Jesus, be the same, yet, if a sin be the cause of it, the withdrawing is a taking away his favour and his love; but, if God does it to secure thy piety, and to inflame thy desires, or to prevent a crime, then he withdraws a gift only, nothing of his love, and yet the darkness of the spirit and sadness seem equal. It is hard, in these cases, to discover the cause, as it is nice to judge the condition, of the effect; and therefore it is prudent to ascertain our condition, by improving our care and our religion; and, in all accidents, to make no judgment concerning God's favour by what we feel, but by what we do.

6. When the holy Virgin, with much religion and sadness, had sought her joy, at last she "found him, disputing among the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions;" and besides, that he now first opened a fontinel, and there sprang out an excellent rivulet from his abyss of wisdom, he consigned this truth to his disciples: That they, who mean to be doctors and teach others, must, in their first accesses and degrees of discipline, learn of those, whom God and public order hath set over us, in the mysteries of religion.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed and most holy Jesus, fountain of grace and comfort, treasure of wisdom and spiritual emanations, be pleased to abide with me for ever, by the inhabitation of thy interior assistances and refreshments; and give me a corresponding love, acceptable and unstained purity, care and watchfulness over my ways, that I may never, by provoking thee to anger, cause thee to remove thy dwelling, or draw a cloud before thy holy face: but if thou art pleased, upon a design of charity or trial, to cover my eyes, that I may not behold the bright rays of thy favour, nor be refreshed with spiritual comforts; let thy love support my spirit by ways insensible; and, in all my needs, give me such a portion, as may be instrumental and incentive to performance of my duty; and, in all accidents, let me continue to seek thee by prayers, and humiliation, and frequent desires, and the strictness of a holy life; that I may follow thy example, pursue thy footsteps, be supported by thy strength, guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy favour, and may, at last, after a persevering holiness and an unwearied industry, dwell with thee in the regions of light and eternal glory, where there shall be no fears of parting from the habitations of felicity, and the union and fruition of thy presence, O blessed and most holy Jesus. Amen.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Preaching of John the Baptist, preparative to the Manifestation of Jesus.

When Herod had drunk so great a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and sought for more from the hill country, Elizabeth carried her son into the wilderness, there, in the desert places and recesses, to hide him from the fury of that beast, where she attended him with as much care and tenderness, as the affections and fears of a mother could express, in the permission of those fruitless solitudes. The child was

about eighteen months old, when he first fled to sanctuary[a]; but, after forty days, his mother died; and his father Zacharias, at the time of his ministration, which happened about this time, was killed in the court of the temple; so that the child was exposed to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of solitariness and discomfort, in a time, when a bloody king endeavoured his destruction. But, "when his father and mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up." For, according to the tradition of the Greeks[b], God deputed an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, as he had formerly done to Ishmael[c], who dwelt in the wilderness; and to Elias[d], when he fled from the rage of Ahab; so to this child, who came in the spirit of Elias, to make demonstration, that there can be no want, where God undertakes the care and provision.

2. The entertainment, that St. John's proveditóre, the angel, gave him, was such, as the wilderness did afford, and such as might dispose him to a life of austerity; for there he continued spending his time in meditations, contemplation, prayer, affections and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey, not clothed in soft, but a hairy garment[e], and a leathern girdle, till he was thirty years of age. And then, "being the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, the word of God came unto John in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching" and baptizing.

3. This John, according to the prophecies of him, and designation of his person by the Holy Ghost, was the forerunner of Christ, sent to dispose the people for his entertainment, and "prepare his ways;" and therefore it was necessary, his person should be so extraordinary and full of sanctity, and so clarified by great concurrences and wonder in the circumstances of his life, as might gain credit and reputation to the testimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the Saviour of the world. And so it happened.

[a] Niceph. lib. i. c. 14. [b] S. Chrys. Hom. de Nativ. S. Jo. Baptistæ.
[c] Gen. xxi. 17. [d] 1 Kings, xix. 5.

[e] Vestis erat curvi setis conserta cameli,
Contra luxuriem molles duraret ut artus,
Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.—*Paulinus.*

4. For as the Baptist, while he was in the wilderness, became the pattern of solitary and contemplative life, a school of virtue, and example of sanctity and singular austerity; so, at his emigration from the places of his retirement, he seemed, what indeed he was, a rare and excellent personage: and the wonders, which were great at his birth, the prediction of his conception by an angel, which never had before happened but in the persons of Isaac and Sampson, the contempt of the world, which he bore about him, his mortified countenance and deportment, his austere and eremitical life, his vehement spirit and excellent zeal in preaching, created so great opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a prophet in his office, for a heavenly person in his own particular, and a rare example of sanctity and holy life to all others: and all this being made solemn and ceremonious by his baptism, he prevailed so, that he made excellent and apt preparations for the Lord's appearing; for "there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins."

5. The Baptist having, by so heavenly means, won upon the affections of all men, his sermons and his testimony concerning Christ were the more likely to be prevalent and accepted; and the sum of them was "repentance and dereliction of sins," and "bringing forth the fruits of good life;" in the promoting of which doctrine, he was a severe reprehender of the Pharisees and Sadducees; he exhorted the people to works of mercy; the publicans to do justice and to decline oppression; the soldiers to abstain from plundering, and doing violence or rapine: and publishing, that "he was not the Christ; that he only baptized with water, but the Messias should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" he finally denounced judgment and great severities to all the world of impenitents, even abscission and fire unquenchable. And from this time forward, viz. "From the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." For now the Gospel began to dawn, and John was like the morning star, or the blushings springing from the windows of the East, foretelling the approach of the Sun of Righteousness: and as St. John Baptist laid the first rough, hard, and unhewn stone of this

building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections; so it was continued by the Master-builder himself, who propounded the glories of the crown of the heavenly kingdom to them only, who should climb the cross to reach it. Now it was, that multitudes should throng, and crowd to enter in at the strait gate, and press into the kingdom; and the younger brothers should snatch the inheritance from the elder, the unlikely from the more likely, the Gentiles from the Jews, the strangers from the natives, the publicans and harlots from the Scribes and Pharisees, who, like violent persons, shall, by their importunity, obedience, watchfulness, and diligence, snatch the kingdom from them, to whom it was first offered; and "Jacob shall be loved, and Esau rejected."

Ad SECTION VIII.

Considerations upon the Preaching of John the Baptist.

1. FROM the disputation of Jesus with the doctors to the time of his manifestation to Israel, which was eighteen years, the holy Child dwelt in Nazareth, in great obedience to his parents, in exemplar modesty, singular humility; working with his hands in his supposed father's trade, for the support of his own and his mother's necessities, and that he might bear the curse of Adam, that, "in the sweat of his brows he should eat his bread:" all the while, "he increased in favour with God and man," sending forth excellent testimonies of a rare spirit and a wise understanding in the temperate instances of such a conversation, to which his humility and great obedience had engaged him. But, all this while, the stream ran under ground: and though little bubblings were discerned in all the course, and all the way men looked upon him as upon an excellent person, diligent in his calling, wise and humble, temperate and just, pious and rarely tempered; yet, at the manifestation of John the Baptist, he brake forth like the stream from the bowels of the earth, or the sun from a cloud, and gave us a precedent, that we should not show our lights to minister to vanity, but then only, when God, and public

order, and just dispositions of men, call for a manifestation: and yet the ages of men have been so forward in prophetical ministries, and to undertake ecclesiastical employment, that the viciousness, and indiscretions, and scandals, the church of God feels as great burdens upon the tenderness of her spirit, are, in great part, owing to the neglect of this instance of the prudence and modesty of the holy Jesus.

2. But now the time appointed was come; the Baptist comes forth upon the theatre of Palestine, a forerunner of the office and publication of Jesus, and, by the great reputation of his sanctity, prevailed upon the affections and judgment of the people, who, with much ease, believed his doctrine, when they had reason to approve his life; for the good example of the preacher is always the most prevailing homily, his life is his best sermon. He, that will raise affections in his auditory, must affect their eyes; for we seldom see the people weep, if the orator laughs loud and loosely; and there is no reason to think, that his discourse should work more with me than himself. If his arguments be fair and specious, I shall think them fallacies, while they have not faith with him; and what necessity for me to be temperate, when he, that tells me so, sees no such need, but hopes to go to heaven without it? or, if the duty be necessary, I shall learn the definition of temperance, and the latitudes of my permission, and the bounds of lawful and unlawful, by the exposition of his practice; if he binds a burden upon my shoulders, it is but reason, I should look for him to bear his portion too. "Good works convince more than miracles[a];" and the power of ejecting devils is not so great probation, that Christian religion came from God, as is the holiness of the doctrine, and its efficacy and productions upon the hearty professors of the institution. St. Pachomius, when he wore the military girdle under Constantine the emperor, came to a city of Christians, who, having heard, that the army, in which he then marched, was almost starved for want of necessary provisions, of their own charity relieved them speedily and freely. He, wondering at their so free and cheerful dispensation, inquired what kind of people these were, whom he saw so bountiful. It was answered, they were Christians, whose profession it is to hurt

[a] S. Chrys. Orat. de S. Babyla.

no man, and to do good to every man. The pleased soldier was convinced of the excellency of that religion, which brought forth men so good and so pious, and loved the mother for the children's sake; threw away his girdle, and became Christian, and religious, and a saint. And it was Tertullian's great argument in behalf of Christians, "See how they love one another, how every man is ready to die for his brother:" it was a living argument, and a sensible demonstration, of the purity of the fountain, from whence such limpid waters did derive. But so John the Baptist made himself a fit instrument of preparation; and so must all the Christian clergy be fitted for the dissemination of the Gospel of Jesus.

3. The Baptist had, till this time, that is, about thirty years, lived in the wilderness under the discipline of the Holy Ghost, under the tuition of angels, in conversation with God, in great mortification and disaffections to the world, his garments rugged and uneasy, his meat plain, necessary, and without variety, his employment prayers and devotion, his company wild beasts, in ordinary, in extraordinary, messengers from heaven; and all this, not undertaken of necessity to subdue a bold lust, or to punish a loud crime, but to become more holy and pure from the lesser stains and insinuations of too free infirmities, and to prepare himself for the great ministry of serving the holy Jesus in his publication. Thirty years he lived in great austerity; and it was a rare patience and exemplar mortification: we use not to be so pertinacious in any pious resolutions, but our purposes disband upon the sense of the first violence; we are free and confident of resolving to fast, when our bellies are full[b]; but, when we are called upon by the first necessities of nature, our zeal is cool, and dissoluble into air, upon the first temptation; and we are not upheld in the violences of a short austerity without faintings and repentances to be repented of, and "inquirings after the vow is past," and searching for excuses and desires to reconcile our nature and our conscience; unless our necessity be great, and our sin clamorous, and our conscience laden, and no peace to be

[b] Satiatis et expletis jucundius est carere quàm frui. — *Cicero de Senect.* c. 47.

had without it; and it is well, if, upon any reasonable grounds, we can be brought to suffer contradictions of nature, for the advantages of grace. But it would be remembered, that the Baptist did more upon a less necessity; and, possibly, the greatness of the example may entice us on a little farther than the customs of the world, or our own indevotions, would engage us.

4. But, after the expiration of a definite time, John came forth from his solitude, and served God in societies. He served God, and the content of his own spirit, by his conversing with angels, and dialogues with God, so long as he was in the wilderness; and it might be some trouble to him to mingle with the impurities of men, amongst whom he was sure to observe such recesses from perfection, such violation of all things sacred, so great despite done to all ministries of religion, that to him, who had no experience or neighbourhood of actions criminal, it must needs be to his sublimed and clarified spirit more punitive and afflictive, than his hairen shirt and his ascetic diet was to his body; but now himself, that tried both, was best able to judge, which state of life was of greatest advantage and perfection.

5. " In his solitude he did breathe more pure inspiration; heaven was more open, God was more familiar[c]," and frequent in his visitations. In the wilderness his company was angels, his employment meditations and prayer, his temptations simple and from within, from the impotent and lesser rebellions of a mortified body, his occasions of sin as few as his examples, his condition such, that, if his soul were at all busy, his life could not easily be other than the life of angels; for his work and recreation, and his visits, and his retirements, could be nothing but the variety and differing circumstances of his piety: his inclinations to society made it necessary for him to repeat his addresses to God; for his being a sociable creature, and yet in solitude, made that his conversing with God, and being partaker of Divine communications, should be the satisfaction of his natural desires, and the supply of his singularity and retirement; the discomforts of which made it natural for him to seek out for some refreshment, and, therefore, to go to heaven for it, he

[c] In solitudine aër purior, cœlum apertius, familiarior Deus.— *Orig.*

having rejected the solaces of the world already. And all this, besides the innocencies of his silence[d], which is very great, and to be judged of in proportion to the infinite extravagancies of our language, there being no greater perfection here to be expected[e], than "not to offend in our tongue." "It was solitude and retirement, in which Jesus kept his vigils; the desert places heard him pray; in a privacy he was born; in the wilderness he fed his thousands; upon a mountain apart he was transfigured; upon a mountain he died; and from a mountain he ascended to his Father:" in which retirements his devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumstances, and himself in such dispositions twice had the opportunities of glory.

6. And yet, after all these excellences, the Spirit of God called the Baptist forth to a more excellent ministry: for, in solitude, pious persons might go to heaven by the way of prayers and devotion; but, in society, they might go to heaven by the way of mercy, and charity, and dispensations to others. In solitude, there are fewer occasions of vices, but there is also the exercise of fewer virtues; and the temptations, though they be not from many objects, yet are, in some circumstances, more dangerous, not only because the worst of evils, spiritual pride[f], does seldom miss to creep upon those goodly oaks, like ivy, and suck their heart out, and a great mortifier without some complacencies in himself, or affectations or opinions, or something of singularity, is almost as unusual as virgin purity and unstained thoughts in the Bordelli, (S. Hierom had tried it, and found it so by experience, and he it was, that said so;) but also, because whatsoever temptation does invade such retired persons, they have privacies enough to act it in[g], and no eyes upon them but the eye of Heaven, no shame to encounter withal, no fears of being discovered: and we know by experience, that a witness of our conversation is a great restraint to the

[d] Πολλοῖς γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φάρμακον κακῶν σιγὴ, μάλιστα δ' ἐστὶ σώφρονος τρόπου σημεῖον. — *Curcinus.*

[e] James, iii. Petrus Cellensis, lib. iv. ep. 12.

[f] In solitudine citò obrepit superbia. Ep. 4.

[g] Non minorem flagitiis occasionem secreta præbuerint. — *Quint.*

Maxima pars peccatorum tollitur, si peccaturis testis assistat. — *Senec.*

Malum quod nemo videt, nemo arguit; ubi non timetur reprehensor, securiùs accedit tentator, et liberiùs perpetratur iniquitas. — *S. Bern.*

inordination of our actions. Men seek out darknesses and secrecies to commit a sin; and "the evil, that no man sees, no man reproves; and that makes the temptation bold and confident, and the iniquity easy and ready:" so that, as they have not so many tempters, as they have abroad, so neither have they so many restraints; their vices are not so many, but they are more dangerous in themselves, and to the world safe and opportune. And as they communicate less with the world, so they do less charity, and fewer offices of mercy: no sermons there but when solitude is made popular, and the city removes into the wilderness; no comforts of a public religion, or visible remonstrances of the communion of saints; and of all the kinds of spiritual mercy, only one can there properly be exercised; and, of the corporal, none at all. And this is true in lives and institutions of less retirement, in proportion to the degree of the solitude: and, therefore, church-story reports of divers very holy persons, who left their wildernesses and sweetnesses of devotion in their retirement, to serve God in public by the ways of charity and exterior offices. Thus St. Antony and Acepsamas came forth to encourage the fainting people to contend to death for the crown of martyrdom[h]; and the Aphraates, in the time of Valens, the Arian emperor, came abroad to assist the church, in the suppressing the flames, kindled by the Arian faction. And, upon this ground, they, that are the greatest admirers of eremitical life, call the episcopal function "the state of perfection," and a degree of ministerial and honorary excellence beyond the pieties and contemplations of solitude, because of the advantages of gaining souls, and religious conversation, and going to God by doing good to others.

7. John the Baptist united both these lives; and our blessed Saviour, who is the great precedent of sanctity and prudence, hath determined this question in his own instance; for he lived a life common, sociable, humane, charitable, and public; and yet, for the opportunities of especial devotion, retired to prayer and contemplation, but came forth speedily; for the devil never set upon him but in the wilderness, and

[h] Euseb. Hist. lib. vi. c. 3. Theod. lib. iv. c. 23, 24. Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat acceptius, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur. — *Cicer. Somn. Scipion.* c. 4.

by the advantage of retirement. For as God hath many, so the devil hath some, opportunities of doing his work in our solitariness. But Jesus reconciled both; and so did John the Baptist, in several degrees and manners[1]: and from both we are taught, that solitude is a good school, and the world is the best theatre; the institution is best there, but the practice here; the wilderness hath the advantage of discipline, and society opportunities of perfection; privacy is the best for devotion, and the public for charity. In both, God hath many saints and servants; and from both, the devil hath had some.

8. His sermon was an exhortation to repentance and an holy life: he gave particular schedules of duty to several states of persons; sharply reproved the Pharisees for their hypocrisy and impiety; it being worse in them, because contrary to their rule, their profession, and institution; gently guided others into the ways of righteousness, calling them "the straight ways of the Lord," that is, the direct and shortest way to the kingdom, for of all lines the straight is the shortest, and as every angle is a turning out of the way, so every sin is an obliquity, and interrupts the journey. By such discourses, and a baptism, he disposed the spirits of men for the entertaining the Messias, and the homilies of the Gospel. For John's doctrine was to the sermons of Jesus, as a preface to a discourse; and his baptism was to the new institution and discipline of the kingdom, as the vigils to a holy day; of the same kind, in a less degree. But the whole economy of it represents to us, that repentance is the first intromission into the sanctities of Christian religion. The Lord treads upon no paths, that are not hallowed and made smooth by the sorrows and cares of contrition, and the impediments of sin cleared by dereliction and the succeeding fruits of emendation. But as it related to the Jews, his baptism did signify, by a cognation to their usual rites and ceremonies of ablution, and washing Gentile proselytes, that the Jews had so far receded from their duty and that holiness, which God required of them by the law, that they were in the state of strangers, no better than heathens; and, therefore, were to be treated, as themselves

[1] Ὁ Ἰωάννης φιλέρημος, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἥμερος καὶ τιθασσὸς καὶ ἀγέλαιος.

received Gentile proselytes, by a baptism and a new state of life, before they could be fit for the reception of the Messias, or be admitted to his kingdom.

9. It was an excellent sweetness of religion, that had entirely possessed the soul of the Baptist, that in so great reputation of sanctity, so mighty concourse of people, such great multitudes of disciples and confidents, and such throngs of admirers, he was humble without mixtures of vanity, and confirmed in his temper and piety against the strength of the most impetuous temptation. And he was tried to some purpose: for when he was tempted to confess himself to be the Christ, he refused it; or to be Elias, or to be accounted "that prophet," he refused all such great appellatives, and confessed himself only to be "a voice," the lowest of entities, whose being depends upon the speaker, just as himself did upon the pleasure of God, receiving form, and publication, and employment, wholly by the will of his Lord, in order to the manifestation of "the Word eternal." It were well, that the spirits of men would not arrogate more than their own, though they did not lessen their own just dues. It may concern some end of piety or prudence, that our reputation be preserved by all just means; but never, that we assume the dues of others, or grow vain by the spoils of an undeserved dignity. Honours are the rewards of virtue, or engagement upon offices of trouble and public use; but then they must suppose a preceding worth, or a fair employment. But he that is a plagiary of others' titles or offices, and dresses himself with their beauties, hath no more solid worth or reputation, than he should have nutriment, if he ate only with their mouth, and slept their slumbers, himself being open and unbound in all the regions of his senses.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and most glorious God, who, before the publication of thy eternal Son, the Prince of Peace, didst send thy servant, John Baptist, by the examples of mortification, and the rude austerities of a penitential life, and by the sermons of penance, to remove all the impediments of sin, that the ways of his Lord and ours might be made clear, ready, and expedite; be pleased to let thy Holy Spirit lead

me in the straight paths of sanctity, without deflections to either hand, and without the interruption of deadly sin; that I may, with facility, zeal, assiduity, and a persevering diligence, walk in the ways of the Lord. Be pleased, that the axe may be laid to the root of sin, that the whole body of it may be cut down in me; that no fruit of Sodom may grow up to thy displeasure. Thoroughly purge the floor and granary of my heart with thy fan, with the breath of thy Diviner Spirit, that it may be a holy repository of graces, and full of benediction and sanctity; that when our Lord shall come, I may at all times be prepared for the entertainment of so divine a guest, apt to lodge him and to feast him, that he may for ever delight to dwell with me. And make me also to dwell with him, sometimes retiring into his recesses and private rooms, by contemplation, and admiring of his beauties, and beholding the secrets of his kingdom; and, at all other times, walking in the courts of the Lord's house, by the diligences and labours of repentance and an holy life, till thou shalt please to call me to a nearer communication of thy excellences: which then grant, when, by thy gracious assistances, I shall have done thy works, and glorified thy holy name, by the strict and never-failing purposes and proportionable endeavours of religion and holiness, through the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ. Amen.

DISCOURSE IV.

Of Mortification and Corporal Austerities.

1. "FROM the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force," said our blessed Saviour. For now that the new covenant was to be made with man, repentance, which is so great a part of it, being, in very many actions, a punitive duty, afflictive and vindicative, "from the days of the Baptist" (who first, by office and solemnity of design, published this doctrine,) violence was done to the inclinations and dispositions of man, and by such violences we were to be possessed

of the kingdom. And his example was the best commentary upon his text; he did violence to himself; he lived a life, in which the rudenesses of camel's hair, and the lowest nutriment of flies and honey of the desert, his life of singularity, his retirement from the sweetnesses of society, his resisting the greatest of temptations, and despising to assume false honours, were instances of that violence, and explications of the doctrine of self-denial and mortification, which are the pedestal of the cross, and the supporters of Christianity, as it distinguishes from all laws, religions, and institutions of the world.

2. Mortification is the one half of Christianity; it is a dying to the world; it is a denying of the will and all its natural desires: "An abstinence from pleasure and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit, both may join in the service of God, and in the offices of holy religion[a]." It consists in actions of severity and renunciation; it refuses to give entertainment to any vanity, nor uses a freer license in things lawful, lest it be tempted to things unlawful; it kills the lusts of the flesh by taking away its fuel and incentives, and by using to contradict its appetite, does inure it, with more facility, to obey the superior faculties: and, in effect, it is nothing but a great care we sin not, and a prudent and severe using such remedies and instruments, which in nature and grace are made apt for the production of our purposes. And it consists in interior and exterior offices; these being but instruments of the interior, as the body is organical or instrumental to the soul, and no part of the duty itself, but as they are advantages to the end, the mortification of the spirit; which by whatsoever means we have once acquired and do continue, we are disobliged from all other exterior severities, unless by accident they come to be obligatory, and from some other cause.

3. Mortification of the will or the spirit of man, that is the duty; that the will of man may humbly obey God, and absolutely rule its inferior faculties; that the inordinations of our natural desires, begun by Adam's sin, and continued and increased by our continuing evil customs, may be again

[a] Τὸν ἐπὶ παθαιρέσει τοῦ φρονήματος σαρκὸς πρὸς τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας σκοπὸν ἐπιτεθευμένην ἀσκησιν τῶν ἰδίων. — *S. Basil.*

placed in the right order; that, since many of the Divine precepts are restraints upon our natural desires, we should so deny those appetites, that covet after natural satisfactions, that they may not serve themselves by disserving God. For therefore our own wills are our greatest dangers and our greatest enemies; because they tend to courses contradictory to God. God commands us to be humble; our own desires are to be great, considerable, and high; and we are never secure enough from contempt, unless we can place our neighbours at our feet: here, therefore, we must deny our will, and appetites of greatness, for the purchase of humility. God commands temperance and chastity; our desires and natural promptness break the band asunder, and entertain dissolutions to the licentiousness of Apicius, or the wantonness of a Mahometan paradise, sacrificing meat and drink-offerings to our appetites, as if our stomachs were the temples of Bel, and making women and the opportunities of lust to be our dwelling, and our employment, even beyond the common looseness of entertainment: here, therefore, we must deny our own wills, our appetites of gluttony and drunkenness, and our prurient beastly inclinations, for the purchase of temperance and chastity. And every other virtue is, either directly or by accident, a certain instance of this great duty, which is, like a catholicon, purgative of all distemperatures, and is the best preparative and disposition to prayer in the world.

4. For it is a sad consideration, and of secret reason, that since prayer, of all duties, is certainly the sweetest and the easiest, it having in it no difficulty or vexatious labour, no weariness of bones, no dimness of eyes or hollow cheeks, is directly consequent to it, no natural desires of contradictory quality, nothing of disease, but much of comfort, and more of hope in it; yet we are infinitely averse from it, weary of its length, glad of an occasion to pretermit our offices; and yet there is no visible cause of such indisposition, nothing in the nature of the thing, nor in the circumstances necessarily appendant to the duty. Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name, till the Spirit of God, by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know, that immortification of spirit is the cause of all our secret and spiritual indispositions: we are so incorporated to the desires of

sensual objects, that we feel no relish or gust of the spiritual. It is as if a lion should eat hay, or an ox venison; there is no proportion between the object and the appetite, till, by mortification of our first desires, our wills are made spiritual, and our apprehensions supernatural and clarified. For as a cook told Dionysius the tyrant, the black broth of Lacedæmon would not do well at Syracuse, unless it be tasted by a Spartan's palate; so neither can the excellences of heaven be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the sottish appetites of the world, and accustomed to diviner banquets. And this was mystically signified by the two altars in Solomon's temple; in the outer court whereof beasts were sacrificed, in the inner court an altar of incense: the first representing mortification or slaying of our beastly appetites; the second, the offering up our prayers, which are not likely to become a pleasant offertory, unless our impurities be removed by the atonement made by the first sacrifices; without our spirit be mortified, we neither can love to pray, nor God love to hear us.

5. But there are three steps to ascend to this altar. The first is, to abstain from satisfying our carnal desires in the instances of sin; and although the furnace flames with vehement emissions at some times, yet to "walk in the midst of the burning without being consumed," like the children of the captivity: that is the duty even of the most imperfect, and is commonly the condition of those good persons, whose interest in secular employments speaks fair, and solicits often, and tempts highly; yet they manage their affairs with habitual justice, and a constant charity, and are temperate in their daily meals, chaste in the solaces of marriage, and pure in their spirits, unmingled with sordid affections in the midst of their possessions and enjoyments. These men are in the world, but they are strangers here: they have a city, but "not an abiding one[b];" they are proselytes of the house, but have made no covenant with the world. For though they desire with secular desires, yet it is but for necessaries, and then they are content[c]; they use the creatures with freedom and modesty, but never to intemperance and transgression; so that their hands are below, tied there by the necessities of

[b] Heb. xiii. 14. [c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

their life; but their hearts are above[d], lifted up by the abstractions of this first degree of mortification. And this is the first and nicest distinction between a man of the world and a man of God; for this state is a denying our affections nothing but the sin; it enjoys as much of the world, as may be consistent with the possibilities of heaven. A little less than this is the state of immortification, and "a being in the flesh," which, saith the apostle, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The flesh must first be separated, and the adherences pared off from the skin, before the parchment be fit to make a schedule for use, or to transmit a record. Whatsoever, in the sense of the Scripture, is flesh, or an enemy to the Spirit, if it be not rescinded and mortified, makes, that the laws of God cannot be written in our hearts. This is the doctrine St. Paul taught the church: "for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live[e]." This first mortification is the way of life, if it continues; but its continuance is not secured, till we are advanced towards life by one degree more of this death. For this condition is a state of a daily and dangerous warfare; and many inroads are made by sin, and many times hurt is done, and booty carried off: for he that is but thus far mortified, although his dwelling be within the kingdom of grace, yet it is in the borders of it, and hath a dangerous neighbourhood. If we mean to be safe, we must remove into the heart of the land, or carry the war farther off.

6. Secondly: We must not only be strangers here, but we must be dead too, "dead unto the world:" that is, we must not only deny our vices, but our passions; not only contradict the direct immediate persuasion to a sin, but also cross the inclination to it[f]. So long as our appetites are high and full, we shall never have peace or safety, but the dangers and insecurities of a full war and a potent enemy; we are always disputing the question, ever struggling for life: but when our passions are killed, when our desires are little and low, then grace reigns, then "our life is hid with Christ in God;" then we have fewer interruptions in the way of righteousness; then we are not so apt to be surprised by

[d] 2 Cor. v. 6. [e] Rom. viii. 13.

[f] O quàm contempta res est homo, nisi super humana se erexerit!—*Sen.*

sudden eruptions and transportations of passions, and our piety itself is more prudent and reasonable, chosen with a freer election, discerned with clearer understanding, hath more in it of judgment than of fancy, and is more spiritual and angelical. He that is apt to be angry, though he be habitually careful, and full of observation that he sin not, may, at some time or other, be surprised, when his guards are undiligent, and without actual expectation of an enemy: but if his anger be dead in him, and the inclination lessened to the indifference and gentleness of a child, the man dwells safe, because of the impotency of his enemy, or that he is reduced to obedience, or hath taken conditions of peace. He that hath refused to consent to actions of uncleanness, to which he was strongly tempted, hath won a victory by fine force; God hath blessed him well. But an opportunity may betray him instantly, and the sin may be in upon him unawares; unless also his desires be killed, he is betrayed by a party within. David was a holy person, but he was surprised by the sight of Bathsheba; for his freer use of permitted beds had kept the fire alive, which was apt to be put into a flame, when so fair a beauty reflected through his eyes. But Joseph was a virgin, and kept under all his inclinations to looser thoughts; opportunity, and command, and violence, and beauty, did make no breach upon his spirit.

7. He that is in the first state of pilgrimage, does not mutiny against his superiors, nor publish their faults, nor envy their dignities; but he that is dead to the world, sees no fault that they have; and when he hears an objection, he buries it in an excuse, and rejoices in the dignity of their persons. Every degree of mortification endures reproof without murmur; but he that is quite dead to the world, and to his own will, feels no regret against it, and hath no secret thoughts of trouble and unwillingness to the suffering, save only that he is sorry he deserved it. "For so a dead body resists not your violence, changes not its posture you placed it in, strikes not its striker, is not moved by your words, nor provoked by your scorn, nor is troubled, when you shrink with horror at the sight of it; only it will hold the head downward in all its situations, unless it be hindered by violence:" and a mortified spirit is such, without indignation against scorn, without revenge against injuries, without mur-

muring at low offices, not impatient in troubles, indifferent in all accidents, neither transported with joy nor depressed with sorrow, and is humble in all his thoughts. And thus, "he that is dead," saith the apostle, "is justified from sins[g]." And this is properly a state of life, in which, by the grace of Jesus, we are restored to a condition of order and interior beauty in our faculties; our actions are made moderate and humane, our spirits are even, and our understandings undisturbed.

8. For passions of the sensitive soul are like an exhalation, hot and dry, borne up from the earth upon the wings of a cloud, and detained by violence out of its place, causing thunders, and making eruptions into lightning and sudden fires. There is a tempest in the soul of a passionate man; and though every wind does not shake the earth, nor rend trees up by the roots, yet we call it violent and ill weather, if it only makes a noise and is harmless. And it is an inordination in the spirit of a man, when his passions are tumultuous and mighty; though they do not determine directly upon a sin, they discompose his peace, and disturb his spirit, and make it like troubled waters, in which no man can see his own figure and just proportions; and therefore, by being less a man, cannot be so much a Christian, in the midst of so great indispositions. For although the cause may hallow the passion, (and if a man be very angry for God's cause, it is zeal, not fury,) yet the cause cannot secure the person from violence, transportation, and inconvenience. When Elisha was consulted by three kings, concerning the success of their present expedition[h], he grew so angry against idolatrous Joram, and was carried on to so great degrees of disturbance, that when, for Jehoshaphat's sake, he was content to inquire of the Lord, he called for a minstrel, who, by his harmony, might recompose his disunited and troubled spirit, that so he might be apter for divination. And sometimes this zeal goes besides the intentions of the man, and beyond the degrees of prudent or lawful; and engages in a sin, though at first it was zeal for religion. For so it happened in Moses, "at the waters of Massah and Meribah, he spake foolishly;" and yet it was, when he was zealous for God, and extremely careful

[g] Rom. vi. 7. [h] 2 Kings, iii. 13, 14, 15.

of the people's interest. For his passion, he was hindered from entering into the land of promise. And we also, if we be not moderate and well-tempered, even in our passions for God, may, like Moses, break the tables of the law, and throw them out of our hands, with zeal to have them preserved; for passion violently snatches at the conclusion, but is inconsiderate and incurious concerning the premises. The sum and purpose of this discourse, is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "He that will be my disciple must deny himself[i];" that is, not only desires that are sinful, but desires that are his own, pursuances of his own affections, and violent motions, though to things not evil, or in themselves contagious.

9. Thirdly: And yet there is a degree of mortification of spirit beyond this: for the condition of our security may require, that we not only deny to act our temptations, or to please our natural desires, but also to seek opportunities of doing displeasure to our affections, and violence to our inclinations; and not only to be indifferent, but to choose a contradiction and a denial to our strongest appetites, to rejoice in a trouble: and this was the spirit of St. Paul,—"I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations[k];" and, "We glory in it[l]." Which joy consists not in any sensitive pleasure any man can take in afflictions and adverse accidents, but in a despising the present inconveniences, and looking through the cloud unto those great felicities, and graces, and consignations to glory, which are the effects of the cross: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed[m];" that was the incentive of St. Paul's joy. And therefore, as it may consist with any degree of mortification to pray for the taking away of the cross, upon condition it may consist with God's glory and our ghostly profit; so it is properly an act of this virtue, to pray for the cross, or to meet it, if we understand it may be for the interest of the spirit. And thus St. Basil prayed to God to remove his violent pains of headach: but when God heard him, and took away his pain, and lust came in the place of it, he prayed to God to restore him his headach again: that cross

[i] Matth. xvi. 24.
[k] 2 Cor. vii. 4.
[l] Rom. v. 3, 4.
[m] Rom. v. 3, 4.

was gain and joy, when the removal of it was so full of danger and temptation. And this the masters of spiritual life call "being crucified with Christ;" because, as Christ chose the death, and desired it by the appetites of the spirit, though his flesh smarted under it, and groaned and died with the burden; so do all that are thus mortified: they place misfortunes and sadnesses amongst things eligible, and set them before the eyes of their desire, although the flesh and the desires of sense are factious and bold against such sufferings.

10. Of these three degrees of interior or spiritual mortification, the first is duty, the second is counsel, and the third is perfection. We sin if we have not the first; we are in danger without the second; but without the third we cannot "be perfect, as our heavenly Father is," but shall have more of human infirmities to be ashamed of, than can be excused by the accrescences and condition of our nature. The first is only of absolute necessity; the second is prudent, and of greatest convenience; but the third is excellent and perfect[n]. And it was the consideration of a wise man, that the saints in heaven, who understand the excellent glories and vast differences of state and capacities amongst beatified persons, although they have no envy nor sorrows, yet if they were upon earth, with the same notion and apprehensions they have in heaven, would not for all the world lose any degree of glory, but mortify to the greatest eminence, that their glory may be a derivation of the greatest ray of light; every degree being of compensation glorious[o], and disproportionably beyond the inconsiderable troubles of the greatest self-denial. God's purpose is, that we abstain from sin; there is no more in the commandment; and therefore we must deny ourselves, so as not to admit a sin, under pain of a certain and eternal curse: but the other degrees of mortification are, by accident, so many degrees of virtue; not being enjoined or counselled for themselves, but for the preventing of crimes, and for securities of good life; and, therefore, are parts and

[n] Κάθαρσις μὲν, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀλογίας, καὶ τοῦ θνητοειδοῦς σώματος· τελειότης δὲ, τῆς ὑπερίας εὐζωΐας ἀνάληψις, πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὁμοίωσιν ἐπανάγουσα. ταῦτα δὲ πέφυκεν ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀληθεια μάλιστα ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ἡ μὲν, τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τῶν παθῶν ἐξορίζουσα· ἡ δὲ, τὸ θεῖον εἶδος, εὐφυῶς ἔχουσα, προσκτωμένη.—*Hierocl. in Pythag. Needham*, p. 8.

[o] Tantam gloriam omni horâ negligimus, quanta bona interim facere possemus, si otiosè eam transigimus.—*S. Bonavent.*

offices of Christian prudence, which whosoever shall positively reject, is neither much in love with virtue, nor careful of his own safety.

11. Secondly: But mortification hath also some designs upon the body. For the body is the shop and forge of the soul, in which all her designs, which are transient upon external objects, are framed: and it is a good servant, as long as it is kept in obedience and under discipline; but "he that breeds his servant delicately[p]," will find him contumacious and troublesome, bold and confident as his son: and, therefore, St. Paul's practice, (as himself gives account of it,) was "to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection, lest he should become a cast-away[q];" for the desires of the body are, in the same things in which themselves are satisfied, so many injuries to the soul; because upon every one of the appetites a restraint is made, and a law placed for sentinel, that if we transgress the bounds fixed by the Divine commandment, it becomes a sin: now it is hard for us to keep them within compass, because they are little more than agents merely natural, and therefore cannot interrupt their act, but covet and desire as much as they can, without suspension or coercion, but what comes from without; which is, therefore, the more troublesome, because all such restraints are against nature, and without sensual pleasure. And, therefore, this is that that St. Paul said, "When we were in the flesh, the passions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death[r]." For these pleasures of the body draw us as loadstones draw iron, not for love, but for prey and nutriment; it feeds upon the iron, as the bodily pleasures upon the life of the spirit, which is lessened and impaired, according as the gusts of the flesh grow high and sapid.

12. He that feeds a lion must obey him, unless he make his den to be his prison. Our lusts are as wild and as cruel beasts; and, unless they feel the load of fetters and of laws, will grow unruly and troublesome[s], and increase upon us, as

[p] Prov. xxix. 21.

[q] 1 Cor. ix. 27. Rom. vi. 4. Heb. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 1. and iv. 1.

[r] Rom. vii. 5.

[s] Αἰχρὸν τῶν μὲν ὑπάτων ἄρχειν, ταῖς δὲ ἡδοναῖς δουλεύειν.—*Isocr. ad Demonic.* ed. Lange, p. 7.

we give them food and satisfaction. He that is used to drink high wines, is sick if he hath not his proportion, to what degree soever his custom hath brought his appetite; and to some men temperance becomes certain death, because the inordination of their desires hath introduced a custom, and custom hath increased those appetites, and made them almost natural in their degree: but he that hath been used to hard diet and the pure stream, his refreshments are much within the limits of temperance, and his desires as moderate as his diet. St. Jerom affirms, that to be continent in the state of widowhood, is harder than to keep our virgin pure: and there is reason, that then the appetite should be harder to be restrained, when it hath not been accustomed to be denied, but satisfied in its freer solicitations. When a fontinel is once opened, all the symbolical humours run thither, and issue out; and it is not to be stopped without danger, unless the humour be purged or diverted. So is the satisfaction of an impure desire; it opens the issue, and makes way for the emanation of all impurity; and, unless the desire be mortified, will not be stopped by purposes and easy desires.

13. Since, therefore, the body is the instrument of sins, the fuel and the incentive, our mortification must reach thither also, at least in some degrees, or it will be to small purpose to think of mortifying our spirit in some instances of temptation. In vain does that man think to keep his honour and chastity, that invites his lust to an activeness, by soft beds and high diet, and idleness and opportunity. Make the soul's instrument unapt, and half the work is done. And this is true in all instances of carnality or natural desires, whose scene lies in the lower region of passions, and are acted by the body; but the operation of the cure must be in proportion to the design; as the mortification of the spirit is in several degrees, so the mortification of the body also hath its several parts of prudence, injunction, and necessity. For the prescribing all sorts of mortifications corporal, indefinitely and indiscriminately to all persons, without separation of their ends and distinct capacities, is a snare to men's consciences, makes religion impertinently troublesome, occasions some men to glory in corporal austerity, as if of itself it were an act of piety, and a distinction of the man from the more

imperfect persons of the world, and is all the way unreasonable and inartificial.

14. First: Therefore, such whose engagements in the world, or capacities of person, confine them to the lowest and first step of mortification; those who fight only for life and liberty, not for privileges and honour; that are in perpetual contestation and close fightings with sin; it is necessary that their body also be mortified in such a degree, that their desires transport them not beyond the permissions of Divine and human laws[t]. Let such men be strict in the rules of temperance and sobriety, be chaste within the laws of marriage, cherish their body to preserve their health, and their health to serve God, and to do their offices. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are the strict laws of temperance; denying all transgressions of the appetite, boiling over its margin and proper limits; assiduous prayer, and observation of the public laws of fasting; which are framed so moderate and even, as to be proportionable to the common manner of living of persons secular and encumbered. For though many persons of common employments, and even manner of living, have, in the midst of worldly avocations, undertaken austerities very rude and rigorous, yet it was in order to a higher mortification of spirit; and it is also necessary they should, if either naturally, or habitually, or easily, they suffer violent transportation of passions: for since the occasions of anger and disturbance in the world frequently occur, if such passions be not restrained by greater violence than is competent to the ordinary offices of a moderate piety, the cure is weaker than the humour, and so leaves the work imperfect.

15. Secondly: But this is coincident to the second degree of mortification; for if, either out of desire of a farther step towards perfection, or out of the necessities of nature or evil customs, it be necessary also to subdue our passions, as well

[t] Huic epulæ, vicisse famem; magnique penates,
Summovisse hyemem tecto; pretiosaque vestis,
Hirtam membra super, Romani more Quiritis,
Induxisse togam. *De Catone dixit Lucanus*, ii. 384.

Intonsos rigidam in frontem descendere canos
Passus erat, mœstamque genis increscere barbam.
De eadem, ii. 376.

as the direct invitations to sin; in both these cases the body must suffer more austerities, even such as directly are contrariant to every passionate disturbance, though it be not ever sinful in the instance. All mortifiers must abstain from every thing that is unlawful; but these, that they may abstain from things unlawful, must also deny to themselves satisfaction in things lawful and pleasant: and this in a just proportion to the end, the subduing the passions, lest their liberty and boldness become licentious. And we shall easier deny their importunity to sin, when we will not please them in those things in which we may: such in which the fear of God, and the danger of our souls, and the convictions of reason and religion, do not immediately co-operate. And this was the practice of David, when he had thirsted for the water of Bethlehem, and some of his worthies ventured their lives, and brought it; "he refused to drink it, but poured it upon the ground unto the Lord[w];" that is, it became a drink-offering unto the Lord; an acceptable oblation, in which he sacrificed his desires to God, denying himself the satisfaction of such a desire, which was natural and innocent, save that it was something nice, delicate, and curious. Like this was the act of the fathers, in the mountain Nitria[x], to one of which a fair cluster of dried grapes being sent, he refused to taste them, lest he should be too sensual and much pleased, but sent them to another, and he to a third; and the same consideration transmitted the present through all their cells, till it came to the first man again; all of them not daring to content their appetite in a thing too much desired, lest the like importunity, in the instance of a sin, should prevail upon them. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are subtractions, rather than imposition, of austerities; let them be great haters of corporal pleasures, eating for necessity, diet spare and cheap; abridging and making short the opportunities of natural and permitted solaces[y]; refusing exterior comforts; not choosing the most pleasant object; not suffering delight to be the end of eating, and therefore separating delight from it as much as prudently they may; not being too importunate with God to remove his gentler hand

[w] 2 Sam. xxiii. 17.

[x] Apud Pallad. in Histor. Lausiac.

[y] Quantò quisque sibi plura negaverit, à Diis plura feret.—*Hor.* iii. 16, 21.

of paternal correction, but inuring ourselves to patient suffering, and indifferent acceptation of the cross that God lays upon us, at no hand living delicately, or curiously, or impatiently. And this was the condition of St. Paul, suffering with excellent temper all those persecutions and inconveniences, which the enemies of religion loaded him withal; which he called "bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body[z]," and "carrying about in his body the dying[a]" or mortification "of the Lord Jesus:" it was in the matter of persecution, which because he bare patiently, and was accustomed to, and he accepted with indifference and renunciation, they were the mortifications and the marks of Jesus; that is, a true conformity to the passion of Christ, and of great effect and interest for the preventing sins by the mortification of his natural desires.

16. Thirdly: But in the pale of the church, there are, and have been, many tall cedars, whose tops have reached to heaven; some there are that choose afflictions of the body, that, by turning the bent and inclination of their affections into sensual displeasures, they may not only cut off all pretensions of temptation, but grow in spiritual graces, and perfections intellectual and beatified. To this purpose they served themselves with the instances of sack-cloth, hard lodging, long fasts, pernoctation in prayers, renunciation of all secular possessions, great and expensive charity, bodily labours to great weariness and affliction, and many other prodigies of voluntary suffering, which Scripture and the ecclesiastical stories do frequently mention. St. Lewis, king of France, wore sack-cloth every day, unless sickness hindered; and St. Zenobius, as long as he was a bishop. And when Severus Sulpitius sent a sack-cloth to St. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, he returned to him a letter of thanks, and discoursed piously concerning the use of corporal austerities. And that I need not instance, it was so general, that this was, by way of appropriation, called "the garment of the church[b]," because of the frequent use of such instruments of exterior mortification: and so it was in other instances.

[z] Gal. vi. 17. [a] 2 Cor. iv. 10.

[b] Deposuerunt seculi byssum, et sumpserunt ecclesiæ vestimentum, quod est cilicium. — *Ruricius*, ep. 20. *Euseb.* lib. ii. *Hist.* c. 22. *Clem. Alex. Pædag.* lib. ii. c. 1.

St. James neither ate flesh nor drank wine; St. Matthew lived upon acorns, seeds, and herbs; and, amongst the elder Christians, some rolled themselves naked in snows, some upon thorns, some on burning coals, some chewed bitter pills and masticated gums, and sipped frequently of horrid potions, and wore iron upon their skin, and bolts upon their legs, and, in witty torments, excelled the cruelty of many of their persecutors, whose rage determined quickly in death, and had certainly less of torment than the tedious afflictions and rude penances of Simeon, surnamed Stylites. But as all great examples have excellences above the ordinary devotions of good people, so have they some danger and much consideration.

17. First, therefore, I consider, that these bodily and voluntary self-afflictions can only be of use in carnal and natural temptations, of no use in spiritual: for ascetic diet, hard lodging, and severe disciplines, cannot be directly operative upon the spirit, but only by mediation of the body, by abating its extravagancies, by subtracting its maintenance, by lessening its temptations; these may help to preserve the soul chaste or temperate, because the scene of these sins lies in the body, and thence they have their maintenance[c], and from thence also may receive their abatements. But in actions which are less material, such as pride, and envy, and blasphemy, and impenitence, and all the kinds and degrees of malice, external mortifications do so little co-operate to their cure, that oftentimes they are their greatest inflamers and incentives, and are like cordials given to cure a cold fit of an ague, they do their work, but bring a hot fit in its place: and besides that great mortifiers have been soonest assaulted by the spirit of pride, we find that great fasters are naturally angry and choleric. St. Hierom found it in himself, and Ruffinus felt some of the effects of it. And, therefore, this last part of corporal mortification, and the choosing such afflictions by a voluntary imposition, is at no hand to be applied in all cases, but in cases of lust only, and intemperance, or natural impatience, or such crimes which dwell in the senses: and then it also would be considered, whether

[c] Ἐν πλησμονῇ γὰρ νόσοι· ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακοῖς
Πρόσεστιν οὐκ ἔνεστιν ἀφροδίτη βροτοῖς. — *Antiphan.*

or no rudeness to the body, applied for the obtaining patience, be not a direct temptation to impatience, a provoking the spirit, and a running into that, whither we pray that God would not suffer us to be led. Possibly such austerities, if applied with great caution and wise circumstances, may be an exercise of patience, when the grace is by other means acquired; and he that finds them so, may use them, if he dares trust himself: but as they are dangerous before the grace is obtained, so when it is, they are not necessary. And still it may be inquired, in the case of temptations to lust, whether any such austerities, which can consist with health, will do the work? So long as the body is in health, it will do its offices of nature; if it is not in health, it cannot do all offices of grace, nor many of our calling. And therefore, although they may do some advantages to persons tempted with the lowest sins, yet they will not do it all, nor do it alone, nor are they safe to all dispositions: and where they are useful to these smaller and lower purposes, yet we must be careful to observe, that the mortification of the spirit to the greatest and most perfect purposes, is to be set upon by means spiritual, and of immediate efficacy; for they are the lowest operations of the soul, which are moved and produced by actions corporal; the soul may from those become lustful or chaste, cheerful or sad, timorous or confident: but yet even in these the soul receives but some dispositions thence, and more forward inclinations: but nothing from the body can be operative in the begetting or increase of charity, or the love of God, or devotion, or in mortifying spiritual and intellectual vices: and therefore those greater perfections and heights of the soul, such as are designed in this highest degree of mortification, are not apt to be enkindled by corporal austerities. And Nigrinus, in Lucian[d], finds fault with those philosophers who thought virtue was to be purchased by cutting the skin with whips, binding the nerves, razing the body with iron: but he taught that virtue is to be placed in the mind by actions internal and immaterial, and that from

[d] Δῆλος δὲ ἦν καὶ τῶν τοιούτων κατεγνωκὼς φιλοσόφων, οἳ ταύτην ἄσκησιν ἀρετῆς ὑπελάμβανον, ἣν πολλαῖς ἀνάγκαις καὶ πόνοις τοὺς νέους ἀντέχειν καταγυμνάσωσι. τοῦτο μὲν δεῖν οἱ πολλοὶ κελεύοντες, ἄλλοι δὲ, μαστιγοῦντες· οἱ δὲ χαριέστεροι, καὶ σιδήρῳ τὰς ἐπιφανείας αὐτῶν καταξύοντες. ἡγεῖτο γὰρ χρῆναι πολὺ πρότερον ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸ στεῤῥὸν τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαθὲς κατασκευάσαι.—*Lucian. Nigrin. Bipont.* vol. i. p. 50.

thence remedies are to be derived against perturbations and actions criminal. And this is determined by the apostle in fairest intimation, "Mortify, therefore, your earthly members[e];" and he instances in carnal crimes, "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness," which are things may be something abated by corporal mortifications: and that these are, by distinct manner, to be helped from other more spiritual vices, he adds, "But now, therefore, put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying[f]." To both these sorts of sins, mortification being the general remedy, particular applications are to be made, and it must be only spiritual, or also corporal in proportion to the nature of the sins[g]: he seems to distinguish the remedy by separation of the nature of the crimes, and possibly also by the differing words of "mortify[h]" applied to carnal sins, and "put off[i]" to crimes spiritual.

18. Secondly: But in the lesser degrees of mortification, in order to subduing of all passions of the sensitive appetite, and the consequent and symbolical sins[k], bodily austerities are of good use, if well understood and prudently undertaken. To which purpose I also consider, no acts of corporal austerity or external religion are of themselves to be esteemed holy or acceptable to God, are nowhere precisely commanded, no instruments of union with Christ, no immediate parts of Divine worship; and therefore, to suffer corporal austerities with thoughts determining upon the external action or imaginations of sanctity inherent in the action, is against the purity, the spirituality, and simplicity of the Gospel. And this is the meaning of St. Paul, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them which have walked in them[l];" and, "The kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost[m];" and,

[e] Col. iii. 5. [f] Verse 8.

[g] Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes,
Arida nec sitiens ora lavabis aquâ.
Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis?

[h] Νεκρώσατε τὰ μέλη. [i] Ἀπόθεσθε τὰ πάντα.

[k] Ὁ ἐγγὺς πυρὸν πλήρης μαστίγων. — *Clem. Alex. Pædag.* 2.

[l] Heb. xiii. 9. [m] Rom. xiv. 17.

"Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things[a]." Now, if external mortifications are not for themselves, then they are to receive their estimate as they co-operate to the end: whatsoever is a prudent restraint of an extravagant passion, whatsoever is a direct denial of a sin, whatsoever makes provision for the spirit, or withdraws the fuel from the impure fires of carnality, that is an act of mortification; but those austerities which Baal's priests did use, or the Flagellantes, an ignorant faction that went up and down villages whipping themselves, or those which return periodically on a set day of discipline, and using rudenesses to the body by way of ceremony and solemnity, not directed against the actual incursion of a pungent lust, are not within the verge of the grace of mortification. For, unless the temptation to a carnal sin be actually incumbent and pressing upon the soul, pains of infliction and smart do no benefit toward suppressing the habit or inclination: for such sharp disciplines are but short and transient troubles; and although they take away the present fancies of a temptation, yet, unless it be rash and uncharitable, there is no effect remanent upon the body, but that the temptation may speedily return. As is the danger, so must be the application of the remedy. Actual severities are not imprudently undertaken in case of imminent danger; but to cure an habitual lust, such corporal mortifications are most reasonable, whose effect is permanent, and which takes away whatsoever does minister more fuel, and puts a torch to the pile.

19. But this is altogether a discourse of Christian prudence, not of precise duty and religion; for if we do, by any means, provide for our indemnity, and secure our innocence, all other exterior mortifications are not necessary, and they are convenient but as they do facilitate or co-operate towards the end. And if that be well understood, it will concern us that they be used with prudence and caution, with purity of intention, and without pride: for, since they are nothing in themselves, but are hallowed and adopted into the family of religious actions by participation of the end, the doing them not for themselves takes off all complacency and fancy reflecting from an opinion of the external actions, guides and

[a] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

purifies the intention, and teaches us to be prudent in the managing of those austerities, which, as they are in themselves afflictive, so have in them nothing that is eligible, if they be imprudent.

20. And now, supposing these premises as our guide to choose and enter into the action, prudence must be called into the execution and discharge of it, and the manner of its managing. And, for the prudential part, I shall first give the advice of Nigrinus in the discipline of the old philosophers: "He that will best institute and instruct men in the studies of virtue and true philosophy, must have regard to the mind, to the body, to the age, to the former education, and capacities or incapacities of the person*;" to which all such circumstances may be added, as are to be accounted for in all prudent estimations; such as are national customs, dangers of scandal, the presence of other remedies, or disbanding of the inclination.

21. Secondly: It may also concern the prudence of this duty, not to neglect the smallest inadvertencies and minutes of lust or spiritual inconvenience, but to contradict them in their weakness and first beginnings. We see that great disturbances are wrought from the smallest occasions, meeting with an impatient spirit, like great flames kindled from a little spark fallen into an heap of prepared nitre. St. Austin tells a story of a certain person "much vexed with flies in the region of his dwelling, and himself heightened the trouble by too violent and busy reflections upon the inconsiderableness of the instrument, and the greatness of the vexation alighting upon a peevish spirit. In this disposition he was visited by a Manichee, (an heretic that denied God to be the maker of things visible): he being busy to rub his infection upon the next thing he met, asked the impatient person, whom he thought to be the maker of flies? He answered, I think the devil was; for they are instruments of great vexation and perpetual trouble. What he rather fancied than believed, or expressed by anger rather than at all had entertained within, the Manichee confirmed by such arguments, to which his

* Καὶ τὸν ἄριστα παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους προαιρούμενον, τοῦτο μὲν ψυχῆς, τοῦτο δὲ σώματος, τοῦτο δὲ ἡλικίας τε καὶ τῆς πρότερον ἀγωγῆς ἰστοχάσθαι.—*Lucian. Nigrin. Bipont.* vol. i. p. 51.

adversary was very apt to give consent by reason of his impatience and peevishness. The Manichee, having set his foot firm upon his first breach, proceeded in his question, If the devil made flies, why not bees, who are but a little bigger, and have a sting too? The consideration of the sting made him fit to think, that the little difference in bigness needed not a distinct and a greater efficient, especially since the same workman can make a great as well as a little vessel. The Manichee proceeded, If a bee, why not a locust? if a locust, then a lizard? if a lizard, then a bird? if a bird, then a lamb? and thence he made bold to proceed to a cow, to an elephant, to a man. His adversary, by this time, being insnared by granting so much, and now ashamed not to grant more, lest his first concessions should seem unreasonable and impious, confessed the devil to be the maker of all creatures visible[p]." The use which is made of this story, is this caution, that the devil do not abuse us in flies, and provoke our spirits by trifles and impertinent accidents: for if we be unmortified in our smallest motions, it is not imaginable we should stand the blast of an impetuous accident and violent perturbation. Let us not, therefore, give our passions course in a small accident, because the instance is inconsiderable; for, though it be, the consequence may be dangerous, and a wave may follow a wave, till the inundation be general and desperate. And therefore, here it is intended for advice, that we be observant of the accidents of our domestic affairs, and curious that every trifling inadvertency of a servant, or slight misbecoming action, or imprudent words, be not apprehended as instruments of vexation; for so many small occasions, if they be productive of many small disturbances, will produce an habitual churlishness and immortification of spirit.

22. Thirdly: Let our greatest diligence and care be employed in mortifying our predominant passion: for if our care be so great as not to entertain the smallest, and our resolution so strong and holy as not to be subdued by the greatest and most passionate desires, the Spirit hath done all its work, secures the future, and sanctifies the present; and nothing is wanting but perseverance in the same prudence and religion. And this is typically commanded in the precept of God to

[p] Tract 1. in Joh.

Moses and Aaron, in the matter of Peor: "Vex the Midianites, because they vexed you, and made you sin by their daughters." And Phinehas did so; he killed a prince of the house of Simeon, and a princess of Midian, and God confirmed the priesthood to him for ever; meaning, that we shall for ever be admitted to a nearer relation to God, if we sacrifice to God our dearest lust. And this is not so properly an act, as the end of mortification. Therefore it concerns the prudence of the duty, that all the efficacy and violence of it be employed against the strongest, and there where is the most dangerous hostility.

23. Fourthly: But if we mean to be masters of the field, and put our victory past dispute, let us mortify our morosity and natural aversations, reducing them to an indifferency, having in our wills no fondnesses, in our spirits no faction of persons or nations, being prepared to love all men, and to endure all things, and to undertake all employments, which are duty or counsel in all circumstances and disadvantages. For the excellency of evangelical sanctity does surmount all antipathies, as a vessel climbs up and rides upon a wave; "The wolf and the lamb shall cohabit, and a child shall play and put his fingers in the cavern of an aspick;" nations, whose interests are most contradictory, must be knit by the confederations of a mortified and a Christian spirit, and single persons must triumph over the difficulties of an indisposed nature, or else their own will is unmortified, and nature is stronger, than can well consist with the dominion and absolute empire of grace. To this I reduce such peevish and unhandsome nicenesses in matters of religion, that are unsatisfied, unless they have all exterior circumstances trimmed up and made pompous for their religious offices; such who cannot pray without a convenient room, and their devotion is made active only by a well-built chapel, and they cannot sing lauds without church music, and too much light dissolves their intention, and too much dark promotes their melancholy; and because these, and the like exterior ministries, are good advantages, therefore without them they can do nothing, which certainly is a great intimation and likeness to immortification. Our will should be like the candle of the eye, without all colour in itself, that it may entertain the species of all colours from without: and when we lust after

mandrakes, and deliciousness of exterior ministries, we many times are brought to betray our own interest, and prostitute our dearest affections to more ignoble and stranger desires. Let us love all natures, and serve all persons, and pray in all places, and fast without opportunities, and do alms above our power, and set ourselves heartily on work, to neglect and frustrate those lower temptations of the devil, who will frequently enough make our religion inopportune, if we then will make it infrequent; and will present us with objects enough and flies to disquiet our persons, if our natures be petulant, peevish, curious, and unmortified.

24. It is a great mercy of God to have an affable, sweet, and well-disposed nature, and it does half the work of mortification for us; we have the less trouble to subdue our passions and destroy our lusts. But then, as those, whose natures are morose, choleric, peevish, and lustful, have greater difficulty; so is their virtue of greater excellence, and returned with a more ample reward: but it is in all men's natures, as with them who gathered manna, "They that gathered little, had no lack, and they that gathered much, had nothing over:" they who are of ill natures, shall want no assistance of God's grace to work their cure[q], though their flesh be longer healing; and they who are sweetly tempered, being naturally meek and modest, chaste or temperate, will find work enough to contest against their temptations from without, though from within possibly they may have fewer. Yet there are greater degrees of virtue and heroical excellences, and great rewards, to which God hath designed them by so fair dispositions, and it will concern all their industry to mortify their spirit, which, though it be malleable and more ductile, yet it is as bare and naked of imagery as the rudest and most iron nature: so that mortification will be every man's duty; no nature, nor piety, nor wisdom, nor perfection, but will need it, either to subdue a lust, or a passion; to cut off an occasion, or to resist a temptation; to persevere, or to go on; to secure our present estate, or to proceed towards perfection. But all men do not think so.

25. For there are some, who have great peace, no fightings within, no troubles without, no disputes or contradictions

[q] Nemo adeò ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modò culturæ patientem commodet aurem. — *Hor. ep.* 1. i. 39.

in their spirit: but these men have the peace of tributaries, or a conquered people; the gates of their city stand open day and night, that all the carriages may enter without disputing the pass: the flesh and the spirit dispute not, because the spirit is there in pupillage or in bonds, and the flesh rides in triumph, with the tyranny, and pride, and impotency, of a female tyrant. For, in the sense of religion, we all are warriors or slaves; either ourselves are stark dead in trespasses and sins, or we need to stand perpetually upon our guards in continual observation, and in contestation against our lusts and our passions; so long denying and contradicting our own wills, till we will and choose to do things against our wills, having an eye always to those infinite satisfactions, which shall glorify our wills and all our faculties, when we arrive to that state, in which there shall be no more contradiction, but only that "our mortal shall put on immortality."

26. But as some have a vain and dangerous peace, so others double their trouble by too nice and impertinent scruples, thinking that every temptation is a degree of immortification. As long as we live, we shall have to do with enemies: but as this life is ever a state of imperfection, so the very design and purpose of mortification is not to take away temptations, but to overcome them; it endeavours to facilitate the work, and secure our condition, by removing all occasions it can: but the opportunity of a crime, and the solicitation to a sin, is no fault of ours, unless it be of our procuring, or finds entertainment when it comes unsent for. To suffer a temptation is a misery; but if we then set upon the mortification of it, it is an occasion of virtue, and never is criminal, unless we give consent. But then also it would be considered, that it is not good offering ourselves to fire ordeal, to confirm our innocence; nor prudent to enter into battle without need, and to show our valour; nor safe to procure a temptation, that we may have the reward of mortification of it. For mortification of the spirit is not commanded as a duty finally resting in itself, or immediately landing upon God's glory, such as are acts of charity and devotion, chastity and justice: but it is the great instrument of humility and all other graces; and, therefore, is to be undertaken to destroy a sin, and to secure a virtuous habit.

And besides that[r], to call on a danger is to tempt God, and to invite the devil, (and no man is sure of a victory): it is also great imprudence to create a need, that we may take it away again; to drink poison, to make experiment of the antidote; and, at the best, it is but a running back, to come just to the same place again: for he that is not tempted, does not sin; but he that invites a temptation, that he might overcome it, or provokes a passion, that he may allay it, is then but in the same condition after his pains and his danger: he was not sure he should come so far.

THE PRAYER.

O dearest God, who hast framed man of soul and body, and fitted him with faculties and proportionable instruments to serve thee according to all our capacities, let thy Holy Spirit rule and sanctify every power and member, both of soul and body, that they may keep that beauteous order, which, in our creation, thou didst intend, and to which thou dost restore thy people in the renovations of grace; that our affections may be guided by reason, our understanding may be enlightened with thy word, and then may guide and persuade our will; that we suffer no violent transportation of passions, nor be overcome by a temptation, nor consent to the impure solicitations of lust; that "sin may not reign in our mortal bodies," but that both bodies and souls may be conformable to the sufferings of the holy Jesus; that in our body we may bear the marks and dying of our Lord, and in our spirits we may be humble and mortified, and like him, in all his imitable perfections; that we may die to sin, and live to righteousness, and, after our suffering together with him in this world, we may reign together with him hereafter; to whom, in the Unity of the most mysterious Trinity, be all glory, and dominion, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

[r] Vide Disc. of Temptation.

SECTION IX.

Of Jesus being baptized, and going into the Wilderness to be tempted.

1. Now the full time was come, Jesus took leave of his mother and his trade, to begin his Father's work, and the office prophetical, in order to the redemption of the world; and when "John was baptizing in Jordan, Jesus came to John, to be baptized of him." The Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been, from their infancy, driven to several places, designed to several employments, and never met till now. But immediately the Holy Ghost inspired St. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at his first arrival he knew him, and did him worship. And when Jesus desired to be baptized, "John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" For the baptism of John, although it was not a direct instrument of the Spirit for the collation of grace, neither find we it administered in any form of words, not so much as in the name of Christ to come, (as many dream [a],) (because, even after John had baptized, the Pharisees still doubted, if he were the Messias; which they would not, if, in his form of ministration, he had published Christ to come after him; and also because it had not been proper for Christ himself to have received that baptism, whose form had specified himself to come hereafter; neither could it consist with the revelation which John had, and the confession which he made, to baptize in the name of Christ to come, whom the Spirit marked out to him to be come already, and himself pointed at him with his finger,) yet it was a ceremonious consignation of the doctrine of repentance [b], which was one great part of the covenant evangelical, and was a Divine institution, the susception of it was in order to the fulfilling all righteousness; it was a sign of humility, the persons baptized confessed their sins; it was a sacramental disposing to the baptism and faith of Christ; but therefore

[a] Gabriel, Sotus, Scotus, &c.

[b] Πρόοιμιον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς χάριτος —Acts, xix. 4.

John wondered, why the Messias, the Lamb of God, pure and without spot, who needed not the abstersions of repentance, or the washings of baptism, should demand it, and of him, a sinner, and his servant. And in the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes used at Bercea (as St. Hierom reports[c]), these words are added: "The mother of the Lord and his brethren said unto him, John Baptist baptized to the remissions of sins, let us go and be baptized of him. He said to them, what have I sinned, that I should go and be baptized of him?" And this part of the story is also told by Justin Martyr[d]. But Jesus wanted not a proposition to consign by his baptism proportionable enough to the analogy of its institution; for as others professed their return towards innocence, so he avowed his perseverance in it; and though he was never called in Scripture a sinner, yet he was made sin for us; that is, he did undergo the shame and the punishment; and therefore it was proper enough for him to perform the sacrament of sinners.

2. But the holy Jesus, who came (as himself, in answer to the Baptist's question, professed) "to fulfil all righteousness," would receive that rite, which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Son. For although the Baptist had a glimpse of him by the first irradiations of the Spirit, yet John professed, that he therefore came baptizing with water, that "Jesus might be manifested to Israel[e];" and it was also a sign given to the Baptist himself, that "on whomsoever he saw the Spirit descending and remaining," he is the person, "that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And God chose to actuate the sign at the waters of Jordan, in great and religious assemblies, convened there at John's baptism; and therefore Jesus came to be baptized, and, by this baptism became known to John, who, as before he gave to him an indiscriminate testimony, so now he pointed out the person in his sermons and discourses, and, by calling him the Lamb of God[f], prophesied of his passion, and preached

[c] Quæst. ad Orthod. 37. [d] Dial. 3. advers. Pelag.

[e] Ἐβαπτίσθη δὲ καὶ ἐπίστευσεν (Ἰησοῦς,) οὐκ ἀυτὸς ἀπορυπάσεως ἢ πιστέως χρείαν ἴσχων ἢ καθάρσεως, ὁ τῇ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα καὶ Ἰωάννῃ ἀλήθειαν μεσσμαρτυρήσῃ, καὶ ὑμῖν ὑπογραμμὸν παράσχηται. — *Clem. Constit. Apost.* lib. vii. c. 22.

[f] Symbolum supplicii crucis. — *Just. Mart.*

him to be the world's Redeemer, and the sacrifice for mankind. He was now manifest to Israel; he confirmed the baptism of John; he sanctified the water to become sacramental and ministerial in the remission of sins; he by a real event declared, that to them, who should rightly be baptized, the kingdom of heaven should certainly be opened; he inserted himself, by that ceremony, into the society and participation of the holy people, of which communion himself was Head and Prince; and he did, in a symbol, purify human nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken.

3. As soon as John had performed his ministry, and Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened, and the air clarified by a new and glorious light[g]; "and the Holy Ghost, in the manner of a dove, alighted upon" his sacred head, and God the Father gave "a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Messias, when he began to be the great Prophet of the new covenant. And this was the greatest meeting that ever was upon earth, where the whole cabinet of the mysterious Trinity was opened and shown, as much as the capacities of our present imperfections will permit; the second person in the veil of humanity, the third in the shape, or with the motion of a dove[h]; but the first kept his primitive state; and as to the Israelites he gave notice by way of caution, "Ye saw no shape, but ye heard a voice;" so now also God the Father gave testimony to his holy Son, and appeared only in a voice, without any visible representment.

4. When the rite and the solemnity was over, "Christ ascended up out of the waters, and left so much virtue behind him, that, as Gregorius Turonensis reports[i], that creek of the river, where his holy body had been baptized, was endued with a healing quality, and a power of curing lepers, that bathed themselves in those waters, in the faith and with invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But the manifestation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet Jesus did no miracles.

[g] Καὶ ἰδοὺ περιέλαμψε τον τόπον φῶς μέγα.— *Evang. Ebion.*

[h] Ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν, Matt. iii. 16, Mark, i. 10. Ἐν σωματικῷ εἴδει, Luke, iii. 22.

[i] De Gloria Martyr. cap. xvii.

5. As soon as ever the Saviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heavens, which yet never had been opened to man, and was declared the Son of God, " Jesus was, by the Spirit, driven into the wilderness," not by an unnatural violence, but by the efficacies of inspiration, and a supernatural inclination and activity of resolution; for it was the Holy Spirit that bare him thither; he was led by the good Spirit to be tempted by the evil: whither also he was pleased to retire, to make demonstration, that even in an active life, such as he was designed to and intended, some recesses and temporary demissions of the world are most expedient, for such persons especially, whose office is prophetical, and for institution of others, that, by such vacancies in prayer and contemplation, they may be better enabled to teach others, when they have in such retirements conversed with God.

6. In the desert, which was four miles from the place of his baptism, and about twenty miles from Jerusalem, as the common computations are, he did abide " forty days and forty nights," where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual fast, without eating bread or drinking water; " and the angels ministered to him," being messengers of comfort and sustentation, sent from his Father, for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and temporal hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

7. Whether the devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shapes, is not certain; but it is more likely, to a person of so great sanctity and high designation, they would appear more angelical and immaterial, in representments intellectual, in words and ideas, temptations and enticements, because Jesus was not a person of those low weaknesses to be affrighted or troubled with an ugly phantasm, which can do nothing but abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of persons nothing extraordinary. And this was the way, which Satan, or the prince of the devils, took, whose temptations were reserved for the last assault, and the great day of trial; for at the expiration of his forty days, Jesus being hungry, the tempter invited him only to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity, and prove his Divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the

devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed. "But Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, that proceeds out of the mouth of God:" meaning, that in every word of God, whether the commandment be general or special, a promise is either expressed or implied of the supply of all provisions necessary for him, that is doing the work of God; and that was the present case of Jesus, who was then doing his Father's work, and promoting our interest, and therefore was sure to be provided for: and therefore so are we.

8. The devil, having failed in this assault, tries him again, requiring but a demonstration of his being the Son of God. He "sets him upon the battlement of the temple [k]," and invites him to throw himself down, upon a pretence that God would send his angels to keep his Son, and quotes Scripture for it. But Jesus understood it well; and though he was secured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God, nor solicit his providence to a dereliction, by tempting him to an unnecessary conservation. This assault was silly and weak. But at last he unites all his power of stratagem, and places the holy Jesus upon an exceeding high mountain, and, by an angelical power, draws into one centre species and ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world [l], and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of Jesus, saying, that all that was put into his power to give, and he "would give it him, if he would fall down and worship him." But then the holy Lamb was angry as a provoked lion, and commanded him away, when his temptations were violent, and his demands impudent and blasphemous. "Then the devil leaveth him, and the angels came and ministered unto him," bringing such things as his necessities required, after he had, by a forty days' fast, done penance for our sins, and consigned to his church the doctrine and discipline of fasting in order to a contemplative life, and the resisting and overcoming all the temptations and allurements of the devil, and all our ghostly enemies.

[k] Πτερύγιον, ἀκροτήριον, τὸ ἐπάνω τῶν ναῶν ἀνατιθέμενον ζῴδιον.

[l] Φαινόμενα ἐν τῷ ἀέρι φαντάσματα ἵστατα ὄντα καὶ ἀβέβαια.

Ad SECTION IX.

Considerations upon the Baptizing, Fasting, and Temptation of the Holy Jesus by the Devil.

1. WHEN the day did break, and the Baptist was busy in his offices, the Sun of Righteousness soon entered upon our hemisphere; and after he had lived a life of darkness and silence for thirty years together, yet now that he came to do the greatest work in the world, and to minister in the most honourable embassy, he would do nothing of singularity, but fulfil all righteousness, and satisfy all commands, and join in the common rites and sacraments, which all people, innocent or penitent, did undergo, either as deleteries of sin or instruments of grace. For so he would needs be baptized by his servant; and though he was of purity sufficient to do it, and did actually, by his baptism, purify the purifier, and sanctify that and all other streams to a holy ministry and effect, yet he went in, bowing his head like a sinner, unclothing himself like an imperfect person, and craving to be washed, as if he had been crusted with an impure leprosy; thereby teaching us to submit ourselves to all those rites which he would institute; and although some of them be, like the baptism of John, joined with confession of sins, and publication of our infirmities, yet it were better for us to lay by our loads, and wash our ulcers, than by concealing them, out of vainer desires of impertinent reputation, cover our disease till we are heart-sick and die. But when so holy a person does all the pious ministries of the more imperfect, it is a demonstration to us, that a life common and ordinary, without affectation or singularity, is the most prudent and safe. Every great change, every violence of fortune, all eminences and unevennesses whatsoever, whether of person, or accident, or circumstance, puts us to a new trouble, requires a distinct care, creates new dangers, objects more temptations, marks us out the objects of envy, makes our standing more insecure, and our fall more contemptible and ridiculous. But an even life, spent with as much rigour of duty to God as ought to be, yet in the same manner of devotions, in the susception of ordinary offices, in bearing

public burdens, frequenting public assemblies, performing offices of civility, receiving all the rites of an established religion, complying with national customs, and hereditary solemnities of a people; in nothing disquieting public peace, or disrelishing the great instruments of an innocent communion, or dissolving the circumstantial ligaments of charity, or breaking laws, and the great relations and necessitudes of the world, out of fancy or singularity, is the best way to live holily, and safely, and happily; safer from sin and envy, and more removed from trouble and temptation.

2. When Jesus came to John to be baptized, John, out of humility and modesty, refused him; but when Jesus, by reduplication of his desire, fortifying it with a command, made it in the Baptist to become a duty, then he obeyed. And so also did the primitive clerks refuse to do offices of great dignity and highest ministry; looking through the honour upon the danger, and, passing by the dignity, they considered the charge of the cure, and knew that the eminence of the office was in all senses insecure to the person, till, by command and peremptory injunction of their superiors, it was put past a dispute, and became necessary, and that either they must perish instantly in the ruins and precipices of disobedience, or put it to the hazard and a fair venture, for a brighter crown or a bigger damnation. I wish also this care were entailed, and did descend upon all ages of the church; for the ambitious seeking of dignities and prelacies ecclesiastical, is grown the pest of the church, and corrupts the salt itself, and extinguishes the lights, and gives too apparent evidences to the world, that neither the end is pure, nor the intention sanctified, nor the person innocent, but the purpose ambitious or covetous, and the person vicious; and the very entrance into church-offices is with an impure torch, and a foul hand, or a heart empty of the affections of religion, or thoughts of doing God's work. I do not think the present age is to be treated with, concerning denying to accept rich prelacies and pompous dignities; but it were but reasonable that the main intention and intellectual design should be, to appreciate and esteem the office and employment to be of greatest consideration. It is lawful to desire a bishoprick; neither can the unwillingness to accept it be, in a prudent account, adjudged the aptest disposition to receive it, (especially if done in

ceremony[a], just in the instant of their entertainment of it, and possibly after a long ambition :) but yet it were well if we remember, that such desires must be sanctified with holy care and diligence in the office; for the honey is guarded with thousands of little sharp stings and dangers; and it will be a sad account, if we be called to audit for the crimes of our diocese, after our own tallies are made even; and he that believes his own load to be big enough, and trembles at the apprehension of the horrors of dooms-day, is not very wise, if he takes up those burdens, which he sees have crushed their bearers, and presses his own shoulders till the bones crack, only because the bundles are wrapped in white linen, and bound with silken cords. "He that desires the office of a bishop, desires a good work," saith St. Paul: and therefore we must not look on it for the fair-spreading sails and the beauteous streamers, which the favour of princes hath put to it, to make it sail fairer and more secure against the dangers of secular discomforts; but upon the burden it bears. Prelacy is a good work; and a good work well done is very honourable, and shall be rewarded; but he that considers the infinite dangers of miscarrying, and that the loss of the ship will be imputed to the pilot, may think it many times the safest course, to put God or his superiors to the charge of a command, before he undertakes such great ministries: and he that enters in by the force of authority, as he himself receives a testimony of his worth and aptness to the employment, so he gives the world another, that his search for it was not criminal, nor his person immodest; and by his weighty apprehension of his dangers he will consider his work, and obtain a grace to do it diligently, and to be accepted graciously. And this was the modesty and prudence of the Baptist.

3. "When Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened." External rites of Divine institution, receive benediction and energy from above, but it is by the mediation of prayer[b]; for there is nothing ritual, but it is also joined with something moral, and required, on our part, in all persons capable of the use of reason, that we may understand,

[a] In Pontifical. Rom.

[b] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3. Gal. iii. 14, 27. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xii. 7, 13. Matth. iii. 2, 6.

that the blessings of religion are works and graces too: God, therefore, requiring us to do something, not that we may glory in it, but that we may estimate the grace, and go to God for it in the means of his own hallowing. Naaman had been stupid, if, when the prophet bade him wash seven times in Jordan for his cure, he had not confessed the cure to be wrought by the God of Israel, and the ministry of his prophet, but had made himself the author, because of his obedience to the enjoined condition; and it is but a weak fancy to derogate from God's grace, and the glory and the freedom of it, because he bids us wash before we are cleansed, and pray when we are washed, and commands us to ask, before we shall receive. But this also is true, from this instance, that the external rite of sacrament is so instrumental in a spiritual grace, that it never does it but with the conjunction of something moral: and this truth is of so great persuasion in the Greek church[c], that the mystery of consecration in the venerable eucharist is amongst them attributed not to any mystical words and secret operations of syllables, but to the efficacy of the prayers of the church, in the just imitation of the whole action and the rite of institution. And the purpose of it is, that we might secure the excellence and holiness of such predispositions and concomitant graces, which are necessary to the worthy and effectual susception of the external rites of Christianity.

4. After the holy Jesus was baptized, and had prayed, the heavens opened[d], the Holy Ghost descended, and a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the Son of God, and one in whom the Father was well pleased; and the same ointment, that was cast upon the head of our High Priest, went unto his beard, and thence fell to the borders of his garment: for as Christ, our Head, felt these effects in manifestation, so the church believes God does to her, and to her meanest children, in the susception of the holy rite of baptism, in right, apt, and holy dispositions. For the heavens open, too, upon us; and the Holy Ghost descends, to sanctify the waters, and to

[c] Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. Euseb. Emiss. Serm. 5. de Pasch. S. August. lib. iii. c. 4. de Trin.

[d] Quòd Christus vidit cœlos apertos, nostrî utique gratiâ factum est, quibus per lavàcrum undæ regeneratricis janua panditur regni cœlestis. — *Beda in Matt.* lib. i. c. 1.

hallow the catechumen, and to pardon the past and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and give him the sacrament and oath of fidelity; for all this is understood to be meant by those frequent expressions of Scripture, calling baptism "the laver of regeneration, illumination, a washing away the filth of the flesh, and the answer of a good conscience, a being buried with Christ[e]," and many others of the like purpose and signification. But we may also learn hence, sacredly to esteem the rites of religion, which he first sanctified by his own personal susception, and then made necessary by his own institution and command; and God hath made to be conveyances of blessing, and ministries of the Holy Spirit.

5. "The Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus, in the manner or visible representment of a dove;" either in similitude of figure, which he was pleased to assume, as the church more generally hath believed; or at least he did descend like a dove, and in his robe of fire hovered over the Baptist's head, and then "sat upon him," as the dove uses to sit upon the house of her dwelling; whose proprieties of nature are pretty and modest hieroglyphics of the duty of spiritual persons, which are thus observed in both philosophies. The dove sings not, but mourns; it hath no gall[f], strikes not with its bill, hath no crooked talons, and forgets its young ones soonest of any of the inhabitants of the air. And the effects of the Holy Spirit are symbolical in all the sons of sanctification: for the voice of the church is sad in those accents, which express her own condition: but as the dove is not so sad in her breast as in her note, so neither is the interior condition of the church wretched and miserable, but indeed her song is most of it elegy within her own walls, and her condition looks sad, and her joys are not pleasures in the public estimate; but they that afflict her, think her miserable, because they know not the sweetnesses of a holy peace and serenity which supports her spirit, and plains the heart under a rugged brow, making the soul festival under the noise of a threne and sadder groanings. But the sons of consolation are also taught their duty by this apparition: for upon whom-

[e] Eph. v. 26. Heb. x. 32. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. vi. 4.
[f] Scil. in hepate; habet autem in intestino.

soever the Spirit descends, he teaches him to be meek and charitable, neither offending by the violence of hands nor looser language. For the dove is inoffensive in beak and foot, and feels no disturbance and violence of passions, when its dearest interests are destroyed; that we also may be of an even spirit in the saddest accidents, which usually discompose our peace: and however such symbolical intimations receive their efficacy from the fancy of the contriver; yet here, whether this apparition did intend any such moral representment or no, it is certain, that wherever the Holy Spirit does dwell, there also peace and sanctity, meekness and charity, a mortified will, and an active dereliction of our desires, do inhabit. But besides this hieroglyphical representment, this dove, like that which Noah sent out from the ark, did aptly signify the world to be renewed, and all to be turned to a new creation; and God hath made a new covenant with us, that, unless we provoke him, he will never destroy us any more.

6. No sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the well-beloved Son of God, but the devil thought it of great concernment to attempt him, with all his malice and his art; and that is the condition of all those, whom God's grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world: and therefore the son of Sirach gave good advice: "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation[s];" for not only the spirits of darkness are exasperated at the declension of their own kingdom, but also the nature and constitution of virtues and eminent graces, which holy persons exercise in their lives, is such as to be easily assailable by their contraries, apt to be lessened by time, to be interrupted by weariness, to grow flat and insipid by tediousness of labour, to be omitted and grow infrequent, by the impertinent diversions of society and secular occasions; so that to rescind the ligaments of vice, made firm by nature and evil habits; to acquire every new degree of virtue, to continue the holy fires of zeal in their just proportion, to overcome the devil, and to reject the invitations of the world, and the softer embraces of the flesh, which are the proper employment of the sons of God, is a perpetual difficulty;

[s] Eccles. ii. 1.

and every possibility of prevaricating the strictnesses of a duty, is a temptation, and an insecurity to them, who have begun to serve God in hard battles.

7. The Holy Spirit did drive Jesus into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. And though we are bound to pray instantly, that we fall into no temptation; yet if, by Divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we be engaged in an action or course of life, that is full of temptation, and empty of comfort, let us apprehend it as an issue of Divine Providence, as an occasion of the rewards of diligence and patience, as an instrument of virtue, as a designation of that way, in which we must glorify God; but no argument of disfavour, since our dearest Lord, the most holy Jesus, who could have driven the devil away by the breath of his mouth, yet was, by the Spirit of his Father, permitted to a trial and molestation by the spirits of darkness. And this is St. James's counsel: "My brethren, count it all joy, when ye enter into divers temptations; knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience[h]." So far is a blessing, when the Spirit is the instrument of our motion, and brings us to the trial of our faith: but if the Spirit leaves us, and delivers us over to the devil, not to be tempted, but to be abused and ruined, it is a sad condition, and the greatest instance of their infelicity, whom the church, upon sufficient reason, and with competent authority, delivers over to Satan, by the infliction of the greater excommunication.

8. As soon as it was permitted to the devil to tempt our Lord, he, like fire, had no power to suspend his act, but was as entirely determined by the fulness of his malice, as a natural agent by the appetites of nature; that we may know, to whom we owe the happinesses of all those hours and days of peace, in which we sit under the trees of paradise, and see no serpent encircling the branches, and presenting us with fair fruit, to ruin us. It is the mercy of God we have the quietness of a minute; for if the devil's chain were taken off, he would make our very beds a torment; our tables to be a snare; our sleeps fantastic, lustful, and illusive; and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an hyena to kiss, and to perish in its embraces. But the holy Jesus

[h] Jam. i. 2.

having been assaulted by the devil, and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so merciful a High Priest, and so sensible of our sufferings and danger, by the apprehensions of compassions, that he hath put a hook into the nostrils of Leviathan; and although the relics of seven nations be in our borders and fringes of our country, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest forty years; and when the storm came, some remedy was found out by his grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up: and we find many persons, who in seven years meet not with a violent temptation to a crime, but their battles are against impediments and retardations of improvement; their own rights are not directly questioned, but the devil and sin are wholly upon the defensive. Our duty here is an act of affection to God, making returns of thanks for the protection, and of duty, to secure and continue the favour.

9. But the design of the Holy Ghost being to expose Jesus to the temptation, he arms himself with fasting, and prayer, and baptism, and the Holy Spirit, against the day of battle; he continues in the wilderness forty days and forty nights, without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God; not suffering the interruption of meals, but representing his own and the necessities of all mankind, with such affections and instances of spirit, love, and wisdom, as might express the excellence of his person, and promote the work of our redemption; his conversation being, in this interval, but a resemblance of angelical perfection, and his fasts not an instrument of mortification[1], for he needed none; he had contracted no stain from his own nor his parents' acts; neither do we find, that he was at all hungry, or afflicted with his abstinence, till after the expiration of forty days. He was afterwards "an hungered," said the evangelist; and his abstinence from meat might be a defecation of his faculties, and an opportunity of prayer, but

[1] Εἶθ' ὅταν τῆς χάριτος καταξιωθῇς, τότε σοι πρὸς ἀντικειμένας δυνάμεις παλαίειν δίδωσι τὴν ἐξουσίαν. ὥσπερ γὰρ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας ἐπείρασε, οὐχ ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τούτου τιμᾶν οὐκ ἐδύνατο, ἀλλ' ὅτι πάντα τάξει καὶ ἀκολουθίᾳ πράττειν ἐβούλετο· οὕτω καὶ σὺ πρὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις παλαίειν μὴ τολμήσας, λαβὲν δὲ τὴν χάριν καὶ λοιπὸν θαρσῶν τοῖς τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὅπλοις, ἀγωνίζου τότε, καὶ εἰ θέλεις, εὐαγγελίζου. — *Cyril. Hieros. Catech.* 3.

we are not sure it intended any thing else. But it may concern the prudence of religion, to snatch at this occasion of duty, so far as the instance is imitable; and in all violences of temptation to fast and pray, prayer being a rare antidote against the poison, and fasting a convenient disposition to intense, actual, and undisturbed prayer. And we may remember also, that we have been baptized and consigned with the Spirit of God[k], and have received the adoption of sons, and the graces of sanctification in our baptisms, and had then the seed of God put into us; and then we put on Christ; and entering into battle, put on the whole armour of righteousness; and therefore we may, by observing our strength, gather also our duty and greatest obligation, to fight manfully, that we may triumph gloriously.

10. The devil's first temptation of Christ was upon the instances and first necessities of nature; Christ was hungry, and the devil invited him to break his fast upon the expense of a miracle, by turning the stones into bread. But the answer Jesus made, was such as taught us, since the ordinary providence of God is sufficient for our provision or support, extraordinary ways of satisfying necessities are not to be undertaken; but God must be relied upon, his time attended, his manner entertained, and his measure thankfully received. Jesus refused to be relieved, and denied to manifest the Divinity of his person, rather than he would do an act, which had in it the intimation of a diffident spirit, or might be expounded a disreputation to God's providence. And, therefore, it is an improvident care and impious security, to take evil courses, and use vile instruments, to furnish our table, and provide for our necessities. God will certainly give us bread; and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the word of God, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises; for if God gives not provisions into our granaries, he can feed us out of his own, that is, out of the repositories of charity. If the flesh-pots be removed, he can also alter the appetite; and when our stock

[k] Ἐάν σοι προσβάλῃ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὁ τοῦ φωδιώκτης καὶ πειραστὴς, προσβαλεῖ δὲ, (καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ καὶ θεῷ μου προσέβαλε διὰ τὸ κάλυμμα, τῷ κρυπτῷ φωτὶ διὰ τὸ φαινόμενον) ἔχεις ᾧ νικήσεις. μὴ φοβηθῇς τὸν ἀγῶνα· προβαλοῦ τὸ ὕδωρ, προβαλοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα, ἐν ᾧ πάντα τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ τὰ πεπυρωμένα σβεσθήσεται. πνεῦμα μέν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ διαλύον ὄρη· ὕδωρ μεν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ πυρὸς σβεστήριον. — *Nazian. Orat. in S. Bapt.*

is spent, he can also lessen the necessity; or if that continues, he can drown the sense of it in a deluge of patience and resignation. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and the spirit, by the comforts of this to support that, that they may bear each other's burden, and alleviate the pressure.

11. But the devil is always prompting us to change our stones into bread, our sadnesses into sensual comfort, our drynesses into inundations of fancy and exterior sweetnesses: for he knows, that the ascetic tables of mortification and the stones of the desert, are more healthful than the fulnesses of voluptuousness and the corn of the vallies. He cannot endure, we should live a life of austerity or self-denial: if he can get us but to satisfy our senses, and a little more freely to please our natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle; but so long as we force him to fight in hedges and morasses, encircling and crowding up his strengths into disadvantages, by our stone walls, our hardnesses of discipline and rudenesses of mortification, we can with more facilities repel his flatteries, and receive fewer incommodities of spirit. But thus the devil will abuse us, by the impotency of our natural desires; and therefore let us go to God, for satisfaction of our wishes. God can, and does, when it is good for us, change our stones into bread: for he is a Father so merciful, that "if we ask him a fish, he will not give us a scorpion; if we ask him bread, he will not offer us a stone;" but will satisfy all our desires by ministrations of the Spirit, making stones to become our meat, and tears our drink; which, although they are unpleasant and harsh to natural appetites, yet, by the operation and influences of God's Holy Spirit, they are made instruments of health, and life, and salvation.

12. The devil, perceiving Jesus to be a person of greater eminence and perfection, than to be moved by sensual and low desires, makes a second assault, by a temptation something more spiritual, and tempts him to presumption and indiscreet confidence, to a throwing himself down from the pinnacles of the temple; upon the stock of predestination, that God might secure him by the ministry of angels, and so prove his being the Son of God. And indeed it is usual

with the devil, when severe persons have so much mortified their lower appetites, that they are not easily overcome by an invitation of carnality or intemperance, to stir them to opinions of their own sanctity, and make their first escaping prove their second and greater dangers. But that the devil should persuade Jesus to throw himself down, because he was the Son of God, was an invitation to no purpose, save only that it gave occasion to this truth, That God's providence secures all his sons in the ways of nature, and while they are doing their duty; but loves not to be tempted to acts unreasonable and unnecessary. God will protect his servants in or from all evils happening without their knowledge, or against their will; but not from evils of their own procuring. Heron, an inhabitant of the desert, suffered the same temptation, and was overcome by it; for he died with his fall, sinfully and ingloriously. For the caresses of God's love to his saints and servants are security against all but themselves. The devil and all the world offer to do them mischief, but then they shall be safe, because they are innocent; if they once offer to do the same to themselves, they lose their protection, because they lost their prudence and their charity. But here, also, it will concern all those, who, by their eminent employment, and greater ministries in ecclesiasticals, are set upon the pinnacle of the temple, to take care that the devil tempt not them to a precipice; a fall from so great a height will break the bones in pieces: and yet there also the station is less firm, the posture most uneasy, the prospect vertiginous, and the devil busy, and desirous to thrust us headlong.

13. St. Hierom here observes well[1], the devil intending mischief to our blessed Saviour, invited him "to cast himself down." He may persuade us to a fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in God, that the devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrained and limited a power, that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it ourselves. And then it will be a strange imprudence to lay violent and unreasonable hands upon ourselves, and do that mischief which our strongest and most malicious adversary cannot; or to be invited by the only rhetoric of a dog's barking, to come near

[1] S. Hieron. in 4. cap. Matt.

him, to untie his chain, to unloose his muzzle, for no other end but that we may be bitten. Just such a fool is every person, that consents to the temptations of the devil.

14. By this time, the devil began to perceive that this was the Son of God, and designed to be the King of all the world, and therefore resolved, for the last assault, to proffer him the kingdoms of the world; thinking ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that, which prevailed upon himself, and all those fallen stars, the angels of darkness. That the devil told a lie, it is most likely, when he said, he had power to dispose the kingdoms of the world; for originally, and by proper inherent right, God alone disposes all governments: but it is also certain, that the devil is a person capable of a delegate employment, in some great mutation of states; and many probabilities have been observed by wise personages, persuading that the grandeur of the Roman empire was, in the degrees of increment and decrement, permitted to the power and managing of the devil; that the greatness of that government, being in all appearance full of advantage to Satan's kingdom, and employed for the disimprovement of the weak beginnings and improbable increase of Christianity, might give lustre and demonstration to it, that it came from God; since the great permissions of power made to the devil, and acted with all art and malice in defiance of the religion, could produce no other effect upon it, but that it made it grow greater; and the greatness was made more miraculous, since the devil, when his chain was off, fain would, but could not, suppress it.

15. The Lamb of God, that heard him with patience tempt him to do himself a mischief, and to throw himself headlong, could by no means endure it, when he tempted to a direct dishonouring of God. Our own injuries are opportunities of patience; but when the glory of God, and his immediate honour, is the question, then is the occasion and precise minute for the flames of a clear-shining and unconsuming zeal. But the care of God's glory had so filled and employed all the faculties of Jesus, that he takes no notice of the offer: and it were well also, that we had fewer opinions of the lustre of worldly dignities, or at least that we, in imitation of our blessed Master, should refuse to accept all the world, when it is to be bought of the devil, at the expense of

a deadly sin. For that government cannot be very honourable, that makes us slaves to the worst of tyrants; and all those princes and great personages, who, by injury and usurpation, possess and invade others' rights, would do well to consider, that a kingdom is too dearly paid for, if the condition be first to worship the devil.

16. When the devil could do no good, "he departed for a time." If he could ever have spied a time of returning, he wanted not will nor malice to observe and use it: and although Jesus was a person without danger, yet I doubt not but the Holy Ghost described that circumstance, that we should not have the securities of a deep peace, when we have had the success of conquerors, for a surprise is most full of horror and of more certain ruin; so that we have no security, but a perpetual observation; that, together with the grace of God, (who takes care of all his servants, and will drive away the tempter when he pleases, and help us always when we need,) is as great an argument for our confidence, and encouragement to our prayers and address to God, as it is safety to our person, and honour to our victory. And let us account it our honour, that the trials of temptation, which is the greatest sadness of our condition, are hallowed by the temptation of Jesus, and our condition assured by his assistances, and the assistances procured by our prayers most easily upon the advantage of his sufferings and compassion. And we may observe, that poverty, predestination, and ambition, are the three quivers, from which the devil drew his arrows, which (as the most likely to prevail) he shot against Christ: but now he shot in vain, and gave probation that he might be overcome; our Captain hath conquered for himself and us. By these instances we see our danger, and how we are provided of a remedy.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, who didst fulfil all righteousness, and didst live a life of evenness, and obedience, and community, submitting thyself to all rites and sanctions of Divine ordinance; give me grace to live, in the fellowship of thy holy church, a life of piety, and without singularity, receiving the sweet influence of thy sacraments and rites, and living in the

purities and innocencies of my first sanctification. I adore thy goodness infinite, that thou hast been pleased to wash my soul in the laver of regeneration, that thou hast consigned me to the participation of thy favours by the holy eucharist. Let me not return to the infirmities of the old man, whom thou hast crucified on thy cross, and who was buried with thee in baptism; nor renew the crimes of my sinful years, which were so many recessions from baptismal purities: but let me ever receive the emissions of thy Divine Spirit, and be a son of God, a partner of thine immortal inheritance; and, when thou seest it needful, I may receive testimony from heaven, that I am thy servant and thy child. And grant that I may so walk, that I neither disrepute the honour of the Christian institution, nor stain the whitenesses of that innocence, which thou didst invest my soul withal, when I put on the baptismal robe, nor break my holy vow, nor lose my right of inheritance, which thou hast given me by promise and grace; but that thou mayest love me with the love of a father, and a brother, and a husband, and a lord, and I serve thee in the communion of saints, in the susception of sacraments, in the actions of a holy life, and in a never-failing love or uninterrupted devotion; to the glory of thy name, and the promotion of all those ends of religion, which thou hast designed in the excellent economy of Christianity. Grant this, holy Jesus, for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of thy name, which is, and shall be, adored for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE V.

Of Temptation.

1. God, who is the fountain of good, did choose rather to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer any evil to be: not only because variety of accidents and natures do better entertain our affections, and move our spirits, who are transported, and suffer great impressions by a circumstance, by the very opposition, and accidental lustre and eminency, of contraries;

but also that the glory of the Divine providence, in turning the nature of things into the designs of God, might be illustrious, and that we may, in a mixed condition, have more observation, and, after our danger and our labour, may obtain a greater reward: for temptation is the opportunity of virtue and a crown; God having disposed us in such a condition, that our virtues must be difficult, our inclinations averse and corrigible, our avocations many, our hostilities bitter, our dangers proportionable, that our labour might be great, our inclinations suppressed and corrected, our intentions be made actual, our enemies be resisted, and our dangers pass into security and honour, after a contestation, and a victory, and a perseverance. It is every man's case; trouble[a] is as certainly the lot of our nature and inheritance, and we are so sure to be tempted, that in the deepest peace and silence of spirit oftentimes is our greatest danger; not to be tempted, is sometimes our most subtle temptation. It is certain, then, we cannot be secure when our security is our enemy; but therefore we must do, as God himself does, make the best of it, and not be sad at that, which is the public portion and the case of all men, but order it according to the intention, place it in the eye of virtue, that all its actions and motions may tend thither, there to be changed into felicities. But certain it is, unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but, by incision and contusions, our roughnesses may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be, either for the temple or the altar, spiritual building or holy fire, something, that God shall delight in, and then the temptation was not amiss.

2. And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation, no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing: and although St. Paul was a person, whose prayers were likely to be prevalent, and his industry of much prudence and efficacy toward the drawing out of his thorn; yet God would not do it, but continued his war, only promising to send him succour,

[a] Erras, mi frater, erras, si putas unquam Christianum persecutionem non pati. Tunc maximè oppugnaris, si te oppugnari nescis.—*S. Hier. ad Heliod.*

"My grace is sufficient for thee[b];" meaning, he should have an enemy to try his spirit and improve it, and he should also have God's Spirit to comfort and support it; but as, without God's grace, the enemy would spoil him, so without an enemy God's grace would never swell up into glory and crown him. For the caresses of a pleasant fortune are apt to swell into extravagances of spirit, and burst into the dissolution of manners; and unmixed joy is dangerous: but if, in our fairest flowers, we spy a locust, or feel the uneasiness of a sack-cloth under our fine linen, or our purple be tied with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a death's head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection.

3. Since, therefore, it is no part of our employment or our care, to be free from all the attempts of an enemy, but to be safe in despite of his hostility; it now will concern us to inform ourselves of the state of the war in general, and then to make provisions, and to put on armour accordingly.

4. First: St. Cyprian[c] often observes, and makes much of the discourse, that the devil, when he intends a battery, first views the strength and situation of the place. His sense, drawn out of the cloud of an allegory, is this: The devil first considers the constitution and temper of the person he is to tempt, and where he observes his natural inclination apt for a vice, he presents him with objects, and opportunity, and arguments fitting to his caitive disposition; from which he is likely to receive the smaller opposition, since there is a party within, that desires his intromission. Thus, to lustful natures, he represents the softer whispers of the spirit of fornication; to the angry and revengeful, he offers to consideration the satisfactions and content of a full revenge, and the emissions of anger; to the envious he makes panegyrics of our rivals, and swells our fancies to opinion, our opinion to self-love, self-love to arrogance, and these are supported by contempt of others, and all determine upon envy, and expire in malice. Now, in these cases, when our natures are

[b] 2 Cor. xii. 9. [c] Serm. de Zelo.

caitive and unhandsome, it were good we were conscious of our own weaknesses, and, by special arts and strengths of mortification, fortify that part, where we are apt and exposed to danger: we are sure enough to meet a storm there, and we also are likely to perish in it, unless we correct those aversenesses and natural indispositions, and reduce them to the evennesses of virtue, or the affections and moderation of a good nature. Let us be sure, that the devil take not a helve from our own branches to fix his axe, that so he may cut the tree down: and certainly he that does violence to his nature, will not be easy to the entertainment of affections preternatural and violent.

5. Secondly: But the devil also observes all our exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities of action; he sees what company we keep, he observes what degrees of love we have to our wives, what looseness of affection towards children, how prevalent their persuasions, how inconvenient their discourses, how trifling their interests, and to what degrees of determination they move us by their importunity or their power. The devil tempted Adam by his wife, because he saw his affections too pliant, and encircling her with the entertainment of fondness, joy, wonder, and amorous fancy: it was her hand, that made the fruit beauteous to Adam; "she saw it fair" of itself, "and so she ate;" but Adam was not moved by that argument, but, "The woman gave it me, and I did eat:" she gave vivacity to the temptation, and efficacy to the argument. And the severity of the man's understanding would have given a reasonable answer to the insinuations of the serpent: that was an ugly beast, and his arguments not being of themselves convincing to a wise person, either must put on advantages of a fair insinuation and representment, or they are returned with scorn. But when the beauteous hands of his young virgin-mistress[d] became the orators, the temptation was an amorevolezza; he kisses the presenter, and hugs the ruin. Here, therefore, it is our safest course, to make a retrenchment of all those excrescences of affections, which, like wild and irregular suckers, draw away nourishment from the trunk, making it as sterile

[d] Habet namque voluptatem quandam admonitio uxoria, quum plurimùm amctur quod consulit.— *S. Chrysost.*

as itself is unprofitable. As we must restrain the inclinations of nature, so also of society and relation, when they become inconvenient, and let nothing of our family be so adopted, or naturalized into our affections, as to create within us a new concupiscence, and a second time spoil our nature: what God intended to us for a help, let not our fondnesses convert into a snare; and he that is not ready to deny the importunities, and to reject the interests, of a wife, or child, or friend, when the question is for God, deserves to miss the comforts of a good, and to feel the troubles of an imperious woman.

6. Thirdly: We also have ends and designs of our own, some great purpose, upon which the greatest part of our life turns; it may be, we are to raise a family, to recover a sunk estate; or else ambition, honour, or a great employment, is the great hinge of all our greater actions; and some men are apt to make haste to be rich, or are to pass through a great many difficulties to be honourable: and here the devil will swell the hopes, and obstruct the passages; he will heighten the desire, and multiply the business of access, making the concupiscence more impatient, and yet the way to the purchase of our purposes so full of employment and variety, that both the implacable desire, and the multitude of changes and transactions, may increase the danger, and multiply the sin. When the enemy hath observed our ends, he makes his temptations to reflect from that angle which is direct upon them, provoking to malice and impatience against whomsoever we find standing in our way, whether willingly or by accident; then follow naturally all those sins, which are instrumental to removing the impediments, to facilitating the passage, to endearing our friends, to procuring more confidents, to securing our hopes, and entering upon possession. Simon Magus had a desire to be accounted some great one; and by that purpose he was tempted to sorcery and divination; and with a new object he brought a new sin into the world, adding Simony to his sorcery, and taught posterity that crime, which, till then, had neither name nor being. And those ecclesiastics, who violently affect rich or pompous prelacies, pollute themselves with worldly arts, growing covetous as Syrian merchants, ambitious as the Levantine princes, factious as the people, revengeful as jealousy, and proud as conquerors and usurpers; and, by this means, beasts are

brought into the temple, and the temple itself is exposed to sale, and the holy rites, as well as the beasts of sacrifice, are made venal. To prevent the infinite inconveniences, that thrust themselves into the common and great roads of our life, the best course is to cut our great channel into little rivulets, making our ends the more, that we may be indifferent to any, proposing nothing great, that our desires may be little; for so we shall be better able to digest the troubles of an enemy, the contradictions of an unhandsome accident, the crossing of our hopes; because our desires are even, and our ends are less considerable, and we can, with much readiness, divert upon another purpose, having another ready with the same proportion to our hopes and desires as the first. Thus, if we propound to ourselves an honest employment or a quiet retirement, a work of charity abroad or of devotion at home, if we miss in our first setting forth, we return to shore, where we can negotiate with content, it being alike to us either to traffic abroad with more gain, or trade at home with more safety. But when we once grow great in our desires, fixing too earnestly upon one object, we either grow impatient; as Rachel, "Give me children, or I die:" or take ill courses and use unlawful means; as Thamar, choosing rather to lie with her father than to die without issue: or else are miserable in the loss and frustration of our hopes; like the women of Ramah, who "would not be comforted." Let, therefore, our life be moderate, our desires reasonable, our hopes little, our ends none in eminency and prelation above others*: for as the rays of light, passing through the thin air, end in a small and undiscerned pyramis, but, reflected upon a wall, are doubled, and increase the warmth to a scorching and troublesome heat; so the desires of man, if they pass through an even and an indifferent life towards the issues of an ordinary and necessary course, they are little, and within command; but if they pass upon an end, or aim of difficulty or ambition, they duplicate, and grow to a disturbance: and we have seen the even and temperate lives of indifferent persons continue in many degrees of innocence; but the temptation of busy designs is too great, even for the best of dispositions.

* Vim temperatam dii quoque provehunt
In majus: iidem odere vires
Omne nefas animo moventes.

7. But these temptations are crasse and material, and soon discernible; it will require some greater observation to arm against such, as are more spiritual and immaterial. For he hath apples to cozen children, and gold for men; the kingdoms of the world for the ambition of princes, and the vanities of the world for the intemperate; he hath discourses and fair-spoken principles to abuse the pretenders to reason, and he hath common prejudices for the more vulgar understandings. Amongst these I choose to consider such, as are by way of principle or proposition.

8. The first great principle of temptation I shall note, is a general mistake, which excuses very many of our crimes upon pretence of infirmity, calling all those sins, to which by natural disposition we are inclined, (though, by carelessness and evil customs, they are heightened to a habit), by the name of sins of infirmity; to which men suppose they have reason and title to pretend. If, when they have committed a crime, their conscience checks them, and they are troubled, and, during the interval and abatement of the heats of desire, resolve against it, and commit it readily at the next opportunity; then they cry out against the weakness of their nature, and think, as long as this body of death is about them, it must be thus, and that this condition may stand with the state of grace: and then the sins shall return periodically, like the revolutions of a quartan ague, well and ill for ever, till death surprises the mistaker. This is a patron of sins, and makes the temptation prevalent by an authentic instrument; and they pretend the words of St. Paul, "For the good that I would, that I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. For there is a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin[f]." And thus the state of sin is mistaken for a state of grace, and the imperfections of the law are miscalled the affections and necessities of nature, that they might seem to be incurable, and the persons apt for an excuse, therefore, because for nature there is no absolute cure. But that these words of St. Paul may not become a savour of death, and instruments of a temptation to us, it is observable, that the apostle, by a fiction of person, (as is

[f] Rom. vii. 19, 23.

usual with him[g],) speaks of himself, not as in the state of regeneration under the Gospel, but under the difficulties, obscurities, insufficiencies, and imperfections of the law; which, indeed, he there contends to have been a rule good and holy, apt to remonstrate our misery, because by its prohibitions, and limits given to natural desires, it made actions (before indifferent) now to be sins; it added many curses to the breakers of it, and, by an efficacy of contrariety, it made us more desirous of what was now unlawful: but it was a covenant, in which our nature was restrained, but not helped; it was provoked, but not sweetly assisted; our understandings were instructed, but our wills not sanctified, and there were no suppletories of repentance; every greater sin was like the fall of an angel, irreparable by any mystery, or express, recorded or enjoined. Now of a man under this covenant he describes the condition to be such, that he understands his duty, but by the infirmities of nature he is certain to fall, and by the helps of the law not strengthened against it, nor restored after it; and therefore he calls himself, under that notion, "A miserable man, sold under sin," not doing according to the rules of the law, or the dictates of his reason, but by the unaltered misery of his nature certain to prevaricate. But the person described here is not St. Paul, is not any justified person, not so much as a Christian, but one who is under a state of direct opposition to the state of grace; as will manifestly appear, if we observe the antithesis from St. Paul's own characters. For the man here named is such, as in whom "sin wrought all concupiscence, in whom sin lived, and slew him," so that he was dead in trespasses and sins; and although he "did delight in the law after his inward man," that is, his understanding had intellectual complacencies and satisfactions, which afterwards he calls "serving the law of God with his mind," that is, in the first dispositions and preparations of his spirit, yet he could act nothing; for the law in his members did enslave him, "and brought him into captivity to the law of sin[h];" so that his person was full of actual and effective lusts, he was a slave to sin, and dead in trespasses: but the

[g] Ut videre est, Rom. iii. 7. Gal. ii. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 12; and x. 23, 29, 30; and xiii. 2.

[h] Rom. vii. 8, 11, 22, 23, 25.

state of a regenerate person is such, as to have "crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts[i];" in whom sin did not reign, not only in the mind, but even also not in the mortal body; over whom sin had no dominion; in whom the old man was crucified, and the body of sin was destroyed, and sin not at all served. And to make the antithesis yet clearer, in the very beginning of the next chapter the apostle saith, "That the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death[k];" under which law, he complained immediately before, he was sold and killed, to show the person was not the same in these so different and contradictory representments. No man in the state of grace can say, "The evil that I would not, that I do;" if, by evil, he means any evil that is habitual, or in its own nature deadly.

9. So that now let no man pretend an inevitable necessity to sin; for if ever it comes to a custom or to a great violation, though but in a single act, it is a condition of carnality, not of spiritual life; and those are not the infirmities of nature, but the weaknesses of grace, that make us sin so frequently; which the apostle truly affirms to the same purpose: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot (or that ye do not[l]) do the things that ye would[m]." This disability proceeds from the strength of the flesh, and weakness of the Spirit: for he adds, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law:" saying plainly, that the state of such a combat, and disability of doing good, is a state of man under the law, or in the flesh, which he accounts all one; but every man that is sanctified under the Gospel is led by the Spirit, and walks in the Spirit, and brings forth the fruits of the Spirit. It is not our excuse, but the aggravation of our sin, that we fall again, in despite of so many resolutions to the contrary. And let us not flatter ourselves into a confidence of sin, by supposing the state of grace can stand with the custom of any sin: for it is the state either of an animalis homo, (as the apostle calls him[n],) that is, a man in pure naturals,

[i] Gal. v. 24. Rom. vi. 6, 12, 14. [k] Rom. viii. 2.
[l] Ἵνα μὴ ποιῆτε. [m] Gal. v. 17. [n] Rom. vii. 14.

without the clarity of Divine revelations, who "cannot perceive or understand the things of God;" or else of the carnal man, that is, a person, who, though in his mind he is convinced, yet he is not yet freed from the dominion of sin, but only hath his eyes opened, but not his bonds loosed. For by the perpetual analogy and frequent expresses in Scripture, the spiritual person, or the man "redeemed by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," is free from the law, and the dominion, and the kingdom, and the power of all sin. "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace[o]."

10. But sins of infirmity, in true sense of Scripture, signify nothing but the sins of an unholy and unsanctified nature, when they are taken for actions done against the strength of resolution, out of the strength of natural appetite and violence of desire; and therefore, in Scripture, the state of sin and the state of infirmity is all one. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly," (saith the apostle[p]:) the condition in which we were, when Christ became a sacrifice for us, was certainly a condition of sin and enmity with God, and yet this he calls a being without strength, or in a state of weakness and infirmity; which we, who believe all our strength to be derived from Christ's death, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of his ascension, may soon apprehend to be the true meaning of the word. And in this sense is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are weak:" for therefore "Christ came into the world to save sinners," those are the persons of Christ's infirmary, whose restitution and reduction to a state of life and health was his great design[q]. So that whoever sin habitually, that is, constantly, periodically, at the revolution of a temptation, or frequently, or easily, are persons who still remain in the state of sin and death; and their intervals of piety are but preparations to a state of grace, which they may then be, when they are not used to countenance or excuse the sin, or to flatter the person.

[o] Rom. viii. 6.

[p] Rom. v. 6. Ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, κατὰ καιρὸν ἀσεβῶν, without strength, that is, ungodly.

[q] Vide August. lib. ii. c. 17. De Peccatorum Meritis, et Enchir. 81.

But if the intermediate resolutions of emendation (though they never run beyond the next assault of passion or desire) be taken for a state of grace, blended with infirmities of nature, they become destructive of all those purposes, through our mistake, which they might have promoted, if they had been rightly understood, observed, and cherished. Sometimes, indeed, the greatness of a temptation may become an instrument to excuse some degrees of the sin, and make the man pitiable, whose ruin seems almost certain, because of the greatness and violence of the enemy, meeting with a natural aptness: but then the question will be, whither, and to what actions, that strong temptation carries him? whether to a work of a mortal nature, or only to a small irregularity? that is, whether to death, or to a wound? for whatever the principle be, if the effect be death, the man's case was therefore to be pitied, because his ruin was the more inevitable; not so pitied, as to excuse him from the state of death. For let the temptation be never so strong, every Christian man hath assistances sufficient to support him, so as that, without his own yielding, no temptation is stronger than that grace, which God offers him; for if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity; it were no sin at all. This, therefore, must be certain to us; when the violence of our passions or desires overcomes our resolutions and fairer purposes, against the dictate of our reason, that indeed is a state of infirmity, but it is also of sin and death, a state of immortification; because the offices of grace are to crucify the old man, that is, our former and impurer conversation, to subdue the petulancy of our passions, to reduce them to reason, and to restore empire and dominion to the superior faculties. So that this condition, in proper speaking, is not so good as the infirmity of grace, but it is no grace at all: for "whoever are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts[r];" those other imperfect, ineffective resolutions are but the first approaches of the kingdom of Christ, nothing but the clarities of lightning, dark as soon as light; and they therefore cannot be excuses to us, because the contrary weaknesses (as we call them) do not make the sin involuntary, but chosen

[r] Gal. v. 24.

and pursued, and, in true speaking, is the strength of the lust, not the infirmity of a state of grace.

11. But yet there is a condition of grace, which is a state of little and imperfect ones, such as are called in Scripture "Smoking flax and bruised reeds;" which is a state of the first dawning of the sun of righteousness, when the lights of grace new rise upon our eyes; and then indeed they are weak, and have a more dangerous neighbourhood of temptations and desires, but they are not subdued by them[s]: they sin not by direct election; their actions criminal are but like the slime of Nilus, leaving rats half formed; they sin but seldom, and when they do it, it is in small instances, and then also by surprise, by inadvertency, and then also they interrupt their own acts, and lessen them perpetually; and never do an act of sinfulness, but the principle is such, as makes it to be involuntary in many degrees. For when the understanding is clear, and the dictate of reason undisturbed and determinate, whatsoever then produces an irregular action excuses not, because the action is not made the less voluntary by it; for the action is not made involuntary from any other principle but from some defect of understanding, either in act, or habit, or faculty. For where there is no such defect, there is a full deliberation according to the capacity of the man, and then the act of election that follows is clear and full, and is that proper disposition, which makes him truly capable of punishment or reward respectively. Now although, in the first beginnings of grace, there is not a direct ignorance to excuse totally; yet, because a sudden surprise or an inadvertency is not always in our power to prevent, these things do lessen the election and freedom of the action: and then, because they are but seldom, and never proceed to any length of time, or any great instances of crime, and are every day made still more infrequent, because grace growing stronger, the observation and advertency of the spirit, and the attendance of the inner man, grows more effectual and busy; this is a state of the imperfection of grace, but a state of grace it is. And it is more commonly observed to be expressed in the imperfection of our good action, than in the irregularity of bad actions:

[s] S. August. lib. de Gratia et liber Arbit. c. 17, et c. 29.

and in this sense are those words of our blessed Saviour, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak;" which, in this instance, was not expressed in sin, but in a natural imperfection, which then was a recession from a civility, a not watching with the Lord. And this is the only infirmity, that can consist with the state of grace.

12. So that now we may lay what load we please upon our nature, and call our violent and unmortified desires by the name of an imperfect grace; but then we are dangerously mistaken, and flatter ourselves into an opinion of piety, when we are "in the gall of bitterness;" so making our misery the more certain and irremediable, because we think it needs nothing but a perpetuity and perseverance to bring us to heaven. The violence of passion and desires is a misery of nature, but a perfect principle of sin; multiplying and repeating the acts, but not lessening the malignity; but sins of infirmity, when we mean sins of a less and lower malice, are sins of a less and imperfect choice, because of the unavoidable imperfection of the understanding. Sins of infirmity are always infirm sins, that is, weak and imperfect in their principle, and in their nature, and in their design; that is, they are actions incomplete in all their capacities; but then passions and periodical inclinations consisting with a regular, and determined, and actual understanding, must never be their principle; for whatsoever proceeds thence, is destructive of spiritual life, and inconsistent with the state of grace. But sins of infirmity, when they pretend to a less degree of malignity, and a greater degree of excuse, are such as are little more than sins of pure and inculpable ignorance; for in that degree, in which any other principle is mixed with them, in the same degree they are criminal and inexcusable. For as a sin of infirmity is pretended to be little in its value and malignity, so it is certain, if it be great in the instance, it is not a sin of infirmity, that is, it is a state or act of death, and absolutely inconsistent with the state of grace.

13. Secondly: Another principle of temptation, pregnant with sin, and fruitful of monsters, is a weaker pretence, which less wary and credulous persons abuse themselves withal, pretending, as a ground for their confidence and incorrigible pursuance of their courses, that they have a

good meaning, that they intend sometimes well, and sometimes not ill; and this shall be sufficient to sanctify their actions, and to hallow their sin. And this is of worse malice, when religion is the colour for a war, and the preservation of faith made the warrant for destruction of charity, and a zeal for God made the false light to lead us to disobedience to man, and hatred of idolatry is the usher of sacrilege, and the defiance of superstition the introducer of profaneness, and reformation made the colour for a schism, and liberty of conscience the way to a bold and saucy heresy: for the end may indeed hallow an indifferent action, but can never make straight a crooked and irregular. It was not enough for Saul to cry "For God and the sacrifice," that he spared the fat flocks of Amalek: and it would be a strange zeal and forwardness, that rather than the altar of incense should not smoke, will burn assafœtida, or the marrow of a man's bones. For as God will be honoured by us, so also in ways of his own appointment: for we are the makers of our religion, if we, in our zeal for God, do what he hath forbidden us[t]. And every sin, committed for religion, is just such a violence done to it as it seeks to prevent or remedy.

14. And so it is, if it be committed for an end or pretence of charity as well as of religion. We must be curious, that no pretence engage us upon an action, that is certainly criminal in its own nature. Charity may sometimes require our lives, but no obligation can endear a damnation to us; we are not bound to the choice of an eternal ruin, to save another. Indeed so far as an option will go, it may concern the excrescences of piety to choose, by a tacit or express act of volition, "to become anathema for our brethren[u]," that is, by putting a case and fiction of law, to suppose it better, and wish it rather, that I should perish than my nation. Thus far is charitable, because it is innocent; for as it is great love to our country, so it is no uncharitableness to ourselves: for such options always are ineffective, and produce nothing but rewards of charity, and a greater glory. And the holy Jesus himself, who only could be, and was, effectively accursed to save us, got by it an exceeding and mighty glorification; and St. Paul did himself advantage by his charitable

[t] Vide Historiam Uzæ, 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7, 8, 9. [u] Rom. ix. 3.

devotion for his countrymen. But since God never puts the question to us, so that either we or our nation must be damned, he having fixed every man's final condition upon his own actions, in the virtue and obedience of Christ, if we mistake the expresses of charity, and suffer ourselves to be damned indeed for God's glory, or our brethren's good, we spoil the duty, and ruin ourselves, when our option comes to act. But it is observable, that although religion is often pretended to justify a sin, yet charity is but seldom; which makes it full of suspicion, that religion is but the cover to the death's head, and at the best is but an accusing of God, that he is not willing or not able to preserve religion, without our irregular and impious co-operations. But however, though it might concern us to wish ourselves rather accursed than our religion, or our prince, or our country, should perish, (for I find no instances, that it is lawful so much as to wish it for the preservation of a single friend;) yet it is against charity to bring such a wish to pass, and, by sin, to damn ourselves really for a good end, either of religion or charity.

15. Let us, therefore, serve God, as he hath described the way; for all our accesses to him, being acts of his free concession and grace, must be by his own designation and appointment. We might as well have chosen what shape our bodies should be of, as of what instances the substance of our religion should consist.

16. Thirdly: A third principle of temptation is, an opinion of prosecuting actions of civility, compliance, and society, to the luxation of a point of piety and stricter duty: and good natures, persons of humane and sweeter dispositions, are too apt to dash upon this rock of offence. But the evil that I would note is, that there are some conditions of men, to whom a vice is so accustomed, that he that mingles with them, must handle the crime and touch the venom. There are some vices which are national; there are some that are points of honour; some are civilities of entertainment; and they are therefore accounted unavoidable, because the understandings of men are degenerous as their manners, and it is accounted sottish and fantastical not to communicate in their accustomed loosenesses. Amongst some men all their first addresses are drinkings, their entertainments

intemperate beyond the permissions of Christian austerity; their drink is humorous, and their humours quarrelous; and it is dishonourable not to engage in duel, and venture your soul to ascertain an empty reputation. These inconveniences rely upon false opinions and vain fancies, having no greater foundation than the sottish discourses of ignorant and ungodly persons; and they have no peculiar and appropriate remedy, but a resolute severity of manners, and a consideration what is required of us as Christians, to confront against those fonder customs and expectations from us, as we engage in the puddles of the world, and are blended in society.

17. To which purposes we must be careful not to engage too freely in looser company, never without business or unavoidable accidents; and when we mingle in affairs, it will concern our safety to watch, lest multitude of talk, goodness, and facility of nature, the delight of company, and the freedom and ill-customed civilities do, by degrees, draw us away from our guards and retirement of spirit. For in these cases, every degree of dissolution disarms us of our strengths; and if we give way so far as we think it tolerable, we instantly and undiscernibly pass into unlawful and criminal. But our best defences are deposited in a severe and prudent understanding, and discerning the sottishness of such principles, which represent vice in civil language, and propound a crime to you under the cover of kindness; which is just so much recompense, as it is satisfaction to a condemned person, that he was accused by a witty orator, and sentenced by an eloquent judge. Remember always, that "the friendships of the world are enmity with God;" and that those societies, which are combined by relations of drink, and wantonness, and impertinence, and crimes, are either inconsiderable in civility, or reason, or reputation; no wise man is moved by their testimony or discourses; and they are so impotent, rude, and undiscerning a theatre, that most commonly he is the best man, who from thence is the worst reported and represented.

18. But in all the instances of this great evil, the very stating the question right is above half the victory. For it is a question between mistaken civility and certain duty; piety on one side, and the disguises of humanity on the other. God and man are the parties interested; and to counterpoise

the influence of the sight and face of man, (which being in a visible communication, it is not in some natures to neglect or contradict,) there are all the excellences of God, the effects of his power, his certain presence and omniscience, the severities of his judgment, and the sweetness and invitation of his mercies; besides the prudence, wisdom, and satisfaction to the spirit, when we wisely neglect such sottish and low abuses and temptations, to conform to the rules of reason and duty, in compliance with the purposes of God and our own felicities.

19. Thirdly: These ill-managed principles are dangers as universal as an infected air; yet there are some diseases more proper to the particular state of religion. First, to young beginners in religion he represents the difficulties of religion, and propounds the greater examples of holy persons, and affrights them with those mountains of piety; observing where, and upon what instance of severity, his fancy will be most apprehensive and afflicted: and this he fails not often to represent, with a purpose, that by believing no piety less than the greatest can be good, he may despair of those heights, and retire into the securities and indifferences of a careless life. But this is to be cured by all those instruments of piety, which in special are incentives of the love of God, and endearments of spiritual and religious affections; and particularly by consideration of the Divine goodness, "who knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust," and will require no more of us than according to our powers and present capacities. But the subject-matter of this temptation is considered and refuted in the discourse of the love of God[x].

20. But most commonly, young beginners are zealous and high, and not so easily tempted to a recession, till after a long time, by a revolution of affections, they are abated by a defervescency in holy actions. The devil uses to prompt them on; not that he loves the piety and the progress, but that he would engage the person in imprudences, and such forwardnesses of expresses, which either are in their own nature indiscretions, or from which, by reason of the incapacity of the person, it is necessary for him to retire. A new

[x] Part 2. in Explicat. of the Decalogue, 1 Com.

convert is like a bird newly entered into a net, through which possibly she might pass without danger, if her fears and unreasonable strivings did not entangle her; but when, by busy and disturbed flutterings, she discomposes the order of it, she is entangled and unpenned, and made a prey to her treacherous enemy. Such are the indiscreet strivings, and too forward enterprises of new penitents; whom we shall observe too often undertaking great austerities, making vows, and casting bands upon their liberty, and snares upon their persons; thinking nothing great enough to expiate their sin, or to present to God, or to endear their services, or secure their perseverance; and therefore they lay a load of fetters upon themselves, or rather cut off their legs, that they may never go back; therefore laying an obligation of vows and intolerable burdens on themselves, that by these they may, by a compendium of piety, redeem the time, and by those make it impossible to prevaricate. But the observation of the sad events and final accidents of these men, hath given probation of the indiscretion of such furious addresses and beginnings. And it was prudently done of Meletius[y], of Antioch, when he visited the dioceses of Syria, and the several religious persons famous for severe undertakings; espying that Simeon Stylites dwelt upon a pillar, and had bound his leg with a strong chain of iron, he sent for a smith, causing it to be knocked off, and said, "To a man that loves God, his mind is a sufficient chain." For the loads of voluntary austerities, rashly undertaken, make religion a burden, when their first heats expire; and their vows, which are intended to secure the practice and perpetuate the piety, are but the occasions of an aggravate crime; and the vow does not secure the piety, but the weariness and satiety of the duty tempts to the breaking of the vow, or at least makes the man impatient, when he cannot persist with content, nor retire with safety.

21. It therefore concerns all spiritual guides, to manage their new converts with sober counsels and moderate permissions, knowing that sublime speculations in the metaphysics are not fit entertainment for an infant understanding. There is "milk for babes, and strong meat for men" of riper piety;

[y] Theod. lib. v. c. 4.

and it will employ all the regular strength of young beginners to contest against the relics of those mischiefs, which remain since the expulsion of the old man, and to master those difficulties, which, by the nature of the state, are certainly consequent to so late mutation. And if we, by the furies of zeal and the impatience of mistaken piety, are violent and indiscreet in the destroying of our enemies, we probably may tread the thistle down, and trample upon all its appearances, and yet leave the root in the ground, with haste and imprudent forwardness. Gentle and soft counsels are the surest enemies to your vice, and the best conservators and promoters of a virtuous state: but a hasty charge, and the conduct of a young leader, may engage an early spirit in dangers and dishonours. And this temptation is of so much greater danger, because it hath a face of zeal, and meets with all encouragements from without; every man being apt to cherish a convert, and to inflame his new fires: but few consider the inconveniences, that are consequent to indiscreet beginnings, and the worse events usually appendant to such inconveniences.

22. Indeed it is not usual, that prudence and a new-kindled zeal meet in the same person: but it will therefore concern the safety of new converts, who cannot guide themselves, to give themselves up to the conduct of an experienced spiritual person, who being disinterested in those heats of the first apprehensions, and being long taught by the observation of the accidents of a spiritual life, upon what rocks rashness and zeal usually do engage us, can best tell, what degrees and what instances of religion they may, with most safety, undertake: but for the general, it is best in the addresses of grace to follow the course of nature; let there be an infancy, and a childhood, and a vigorous youth; and by the divers and distant degrees of increment, let the persons be established in wisdom and grace. But above all things, let them be careful, that they do not lay upon themselves necessities of any lasting course, no vows of perpetuity in any instance of uncommanded action or degree of religion: for he may alter in his capacity and exterior condition; he may see by experience, that the particular engagement is imprudent; he may, by the virtue of obedience, be engaged on a duty inconsistent with the conveniences and advantages

of the other; and his very loss of liberty in an uncommanded instance, may tempt him to inconvenience. But then, for the single and transient actions of piety, although in them the danger is less, even though the imprudence be great, yet it were well, if new beginners in religion would attempt a moderate and an even piety, rather than actions of eminence, lest they retire with shame, and be afflicted with scruple, when their first heats are spent, and expire in weariness and temptation. It is good to keep within the circuits of a man's affections, not stretching out all the degrees of fancy and desire, but leaving the appetites of religion rather unsatisfied, and still desiring more, than by stretching out the whole faculty, leave no desires but what are fulfilled and wearied.

23. Thirdly: I shall not need here to observe such temptations, which are direct invitations to sin, upon occasion of the piety of holy persons; such as are security, too much confidence, pride, and vanity: these are part of every man's danger, and are to be considered upon their several arguments. Here I was only to note the general instruments of mischief. It remains now, that I speak of such remedies and general antidotes, not which are proportioned to sins in special, but such as are preventions, or remedies, and good advices in general.

24. First: Let every man abstain from all occasions of sin, as much as his condition will permit. And it were better to do some violence to our secular affairs, than to procure apparent or probable danger to our souls. For if we see not a way open and ready prepared to our iniquity, our desires oftentimes are not willing to be troubled, but opportunity gives life and activeness to our appetites. If David had not from his towers beheld the private beauties of Bathsheba, Uriah had lived, and his wife been unattempted; but sin was brought to him by that chance, and entering at the casements of his eyes, set his heart on fire, and despoiled him of his robes of honour and innocence. The riches of the wedge of gold, and the beauty of the Babylonish garment, made Achan sacrilegious upon the place, who was innocent enough in his preceding purposes: and therefore that soul, that makes itself an object to sin, and invites an enemy to view its possessions, and live in the vicinage, loves the sin itself; and he

that is pleased with the danger, would willingly be betrayed into the necessity and the pleasure of the sin: for he can have no other ends to entertain the hazards, but that he hath a farther purpose to serve upon them; he loves the pleasure of the sin, and therefore he would make the condition of sinning certain and unavoidable. And therefore holy Scripture, which is admirable and curious in the cautions and securities of virtue, does not determine its precepts in the precise commands of virtuous actions, but also binds up our senses, obstructs the passage of temptation, blocks up all the ways and avenues of vice, commanding us "to make a covenant with our eyes; not to look upon a maid; not to sit with a woman that is a singer; not to consider the wine when it sparkles, and gives its colour rightly in the cup;" but "to set a watch before our mouths, to keep the door of our lips;" and many more instances to this purpose, that sin may not come so near as to be repulsed; as knowing sin hath then prevailed too far, when we give the denial to its solicitations.

25. We read a story of a virtuous lady, that desired of St. Athanasius to procure for her, out of the number of the widows fed from the ecclesiastical corban, an old woman, morose, peevish, and impatient; that she might, by the society of so ungentle a person, have often occasion to exercise her patience, her forgiveness, and charity. I know not how well the counsel succeeded with her; I am sure it was not very safe: and to invite the trouble, to triumph over it, is to wage a war of an uncertain issue; for no end but to get the pleasures of the victory, which oftentimes do not pay for the trouble, never for the danger. An Egyptian, who acknowledged fire for his god, one day doing his devotions, kissed his god after the manner of worshippers, and burnt his lips. It was not in the power of that false and imaginary deity to cure the real hurt he had done to his devoutest worshipper. Just such a fool is he, that kisses a danger, though with a design of virtue, and hugs an opportunity of sin for an advantage of piety; he burns himself in the neighbourhood of the flame, and twenty to one but he may perish in its embraces. And he that looks out a danger, that he may overcome it, does as did the Persian, who worshipping the sun, looked upon him, when he prayed him to cure his sore eyes. The sun may as well cure a weak eye, or a great burden knit

a broken arm, as a danger can do him advantage, that seeks such a combat which may ruin him, and after which he rarely may have this reward, that it may be said of him, he had the good fortune not to perish in his folly. It is easier to prevent a mischief than to cure it; and besides the pain of the wound, it is infinitely more full of difficulty to cure a broken leg, which a little care and observation would have preserved whole. To recover from a sin is none of the easiest labours, that concern the sons of men; and therefore it concerns them rather not to enter into such a narrow strait, from which they can never draw back their head, without leaving their hair and skin and their ears behind. If God please to try us, he means us no hurt, and he does it with great reason and great mercy; but if we go to try ourselves, we may mean well, but not wisely: for as it is simply unlawful for weak persons to seek a temptation, so for the more perfect it is dangerous. We have enemies enough without, and one of our own within[z]: but we become our own tempter, when we run out to meet the world, or invite the devil home, that we may throw holy water upon his flames, and call the danger nearer, that we may run from it[a]. And certainly men are more guilty of many of their temptations than the devil, through their incuriousness or rashness doing as much mischief to themselves as he can: for he can but offer; and so much we do, when we run into danger. Such were those stories of St. Antony provoking the devil to battle. If the stories had been as true as the actions were rash and ridiculous, the story had fastened a note of indiscretion upon that good man; though now I think, there is nothing but a mark of fiction and falsehood on the writer.

26. Secondly: Possibly without fault we may be engaged in a temptation, but then we must be diligent to resist the first beginnings: for when our strength is yet entire and unabated, if we suffer ourselves to be overcome, and consent to its first

[z] Sed quid ego omne malum mundique hominumque maligni
Hostis ad invidiam detorqueo? quum mala nostra
Ex nostris concreta animis, genus, et caput, et vim,
Quid sint, quid valeant, sumunt de corde parente.
Prud. Hamartig.

[a] Ecclus. xxi. 27. Quum exsecratur impius Satanam, suam ipsius animam exsecratur.

and weakest attempts, how shall we be able to resist, when it hath tired our contestation, and wearied our patience, when we are weaker and prevailed upon, and the temptation is stronger and triumphant in many degrees of victory? By how much a hectic fever is harder to be cured than a tertian, or a consumption of the lungs than a little distillation of rheum upon the throat; by so much is it harder to prevail upon a triumphing lust than upon its first insinuations. But the ways of resisting are of a different consideration, proportionably to the nature of the crimes.

27. First: If the temptation be to crimes of pleasure and sensuality, let the resistance be by flight[b]: for, in case of lust, even to consider the arguments against it is half as great temptation, as to press the arguments for it; for all considerations of such allurements make the soul perceive something of its relish, and entertain the fancy. Even the pulling pitch from our clothes defiles the fingers; and some adherences of pleasant and carnal sins will be remanent even from those considerations, which stay within the circuit of the flames, though but with purpose to quench the fire, and preserve the house. Chastity cannot suffer the least thought of the reproaches of the spirit of impurity: and it is necessary to all, that will keep their purity and innocence against sensual temptations, to avoid every thing that may prejudice decorum. Libanius the sophist reports, that a painter being one day desirous to paint Apollo upon a laurel-board, the colours would not stick, but were rejected; out of which his fancy found out this extraction: that the chaste Daphne (concerning whom the poets feign, that, flying from Apollo, who attempted to ravish her, she was turned into a laurel-tree) could not endure him even in painting[c], and rejected him after the loss of her sensitive powers. And indeed chaste souls do, even to death, resent the least image and offer of impurity: whatsoever is like a sin of uncleanness, he that means to preserve himself chaste, must avoid, as he would avoid the sin; in this case there being no difference but of degrees between the inward temptation and the crime.

[b] Time videre undè possis cadere; noli fieri perversâ simplicitate securus.—*S. Aug.*

[c] Καὶ ἀρνεῖται τον ἔρωτα, κἂν τὸ δένδρον.

28. Secondly: If the temptation be to crimes of troublesome and preternatural desires, or intellectual nature, let the resistance be made consertâ manu, by a perfect fight, by the amassing of such arguments in general, and remedies in particular, which are apt to become deleteries to the sin, and to abate the temptation. But, in both these instances, the resistance must at least be as soon as the attempt is, lest the violence of the temptation outrun our powers: for if, against our full strength, it hath prevailed to the first degrees, its progress to a complete victory is not so improbable, as were its successes at the first beginnings. But to serve this, and all other ends, in the resisting and subduing a temptation, these following considerations have the best and most universal influence.

29. First: "Consideration of the presence of God," who is witness of all our actions, and a revenger of all impiety. This is so great an instrument of fear and religion, that whoever does actually consider God to be present, and considers what the first consideration signifies, either must be restrained from the present temptation, or must have thrown off all the possibilities and aptnesses for virtue; such as are modesty, and reverence, and holy fear. For if the face of a man scatters all base machinations, and we dare not act our crimes in the theatre, unless we be impudent as well as criminal; much more does the sense of a present Deity fill the places of our heart with veneration and the awe of religion, when it is thoroughly apprehended and actually considered. We see not God, "he is not in our thoughts," when we run into darkness to act our impurities. For we dare not commit adultery, if a boy be present; behold, the boy is sent off with an excuse, and God abides there, but yet we commit the crime: it is because, as Jacob said at Bethel, "God was in that place, and we knew not of it;" and yet we neither breathe, nor move an artery, but in him, and by his assistance; "In him we live, and move, and have our being[d]." And, "All things are naked and open in his sight[e]." "The iniquity of my people is very great; for they say, The Lord seeth not[f]." "Shall not he that made the eye, see[g]?" "To

[d] Acts, xvii. 28.
[e] Heb. iv. 13.
[f] Ezek. ix. 9. Jer. xxiii. 24.
[g] Psal. xciv. 9.

him the night and day are both alike[h]." These, and many more to the same design, are the voices of Scripture, that our spirits may retire into the beholding of God, to the purposes of fear and holiness, with whom we do cohabit by the necessities of nature, and the condition of our essence, wholly in dependence; and then only we may sin securely, when we can contrive to do it so, that God may not see us.

30. There are many men who are "servants of the eyes[i]," as the apostle's phrase is; who, when they are looked on, act virtue with much pompousness and theatrical bravery[k]; but these men, when the theatre is empty, put off their upper garment, and retire into their primitive baseness. Diogenes endured the extremity of winter's cold, that the people might wonder at his austerity and philosophical patience; but Plato, seeing the people admiring the man and pitying the sufferance, told them, that the way to make him warm himself, was for them to be gone, and to take no notice of him. For they that walk as in the sight of men, serve that design well enough, when they fill the public voice with noises and opinions, and are not, by their purposes, engaged to act in private; but they who are servants of the eyes of God, and walk as in the Divine presence, perceive the same restraints in darkness, and closets, and grots, as in the light and midst of theatres; and that consideration imposes upon us a happy necessity of doing virtuously, which presents us placed in the eyes of our Judge. And, therefore, it was not unhandsomely said of a Jewish doctor, "If every man would consider God to be the great eye of the world, watching perpetually over all our actions, and that his hand is indefatigable, and his ear ever open, possibly sin might be extirpated from off the face of the earth." And this is the condition of beatitude; and the blessed souls within their regions of light and felicity cannot sin, because of the vision beatifical, they always be-

[h] Psal. cxxxix. 12. [i] Ephes. vi. 6. Ὀφθαλμοδουλοι.

[k] Non enim virtute ac studiis, ut haberentur philosophi, laborabant; sed vultum et tristitiam, et dissentientem à cæteris habitum, pessimis moribus prætendebant. — *Quintil.* lib. i. procem.

Ambitio et luxuria et impotentia scenam desiderant; sanabis ista, si absconderis. — *Senec.* ep. 95.

Magna vobis, si dissimulare non vultis, injecta necessitas probitatis, cùm omnia agitis ante oculos judicis cuncta cernentis. — *Boeth.* lib. v. *Consol. prosâ ult.*

hold the face of God: and those who partake of this state by way of consideration, which is essential to the condition of the blessed, and derive it into practice and discourse, in proportion to this shall retain an innocence and a part of glory.

31. For it is a great declension of human reason, and a disreputation to our spirits, that we are so wholly led by sense, that we will not walk in the regions of the Spirit, and behold God by our eyes of faith and discourse, suffering our course of life to be guided by such principles, which distinguish our natures from beasts, and our conditions from vicious, and our spirits from the world, and our hopes from the common satisfactions of sense and corruption. The better half of our nature is of the same constitution with that of angels; and therefore, although we are drenched in matter and the communications of earth, yet our better part was designed to converse with God: and we had, besides the eye of reason, another eye of faith put into our souls, and both clarified with revelations and demonstrations of the Spirit, expressing to us so visible and clear characters of God's presence, that the expression of the same Spirit is, "We may feel him, for he is within us[1]," and about us, and we are in him, and in the comprehensions of his embracings, as birds in the air, or infants in the wombs of their pregnant mothers. And that God is pleased not to communicate himself to the eyes of our body, but still to remain invisible, besides that it is his own glory and perfection, it is also no more to us but like a retreat behind a curtain, where, when we know our Judge stands as an espial and a watch over our actions, we shall be sottish, if we dare to provoke his jealousy, because we see him not, when we know that he is close by, though behind the cloud.

32. There are some general impressions upon our spirits, which, by way of presumption and custom, possess our persuasions, and make restraint upon us to excellent purposes; such as are the religion of holy places, reverence of our parents, presence of an austere, an honourable, or a virtuous

[1] Acts, xvii. 27.
Πεπεισμένοι ὅτι οἱ θεοὶ
Ἠέρα ἐσσάμενοι πάντη φοιτῶσιν ἐπ' αἶαν,
Ἀνθρώπων ὕβρεις τε καὶ εὐνομίας ἐφορῶντες.

person[m]. For many sins are prevented by the company of a witness, especially if, besides the ties of modesty, we have also towards him an endearment of reverence and fair opinion[n]; and if he were with us in our privacies, he would cause our retirements to be more holy. St. Ambrose reports of the Virgin Mary, that she had so much piety and religion in her countenance and deportment, that divers persons, moved by the veneration and regard of her person, in her presence have first commenced their resolutions of chastity and sober living. However the story be, her person certainly was of so express and great devotion and sanctity, that he must needs have been of a very impudent disposition and firm immodesty, who durst have spoken unhandsome language in the presence of so rare a person. And why then any rudeness in the presence of God, if that were as certainly believed and considered? For whatsoever amongst men can be a restraint of vice or an endearment of virtue, all this is highly verified in the presence of God, to whom our conscience, in its very concealments, is as a fair table written in capital letters by his own finger; and then, if we fail of the advantage of this exercise, it must proceed either from our dishonourable opinion of God, or our own fearless inadvertency, or from a direct spirit of reprobation: for it is certain, that this consideration is, in its own nature, apt to correct our manners, to produce the fear of God[o], and humility, and spiritual and holy thoughts, and the knowledge of God and of ourselves, and the consequents of all these, holy walking, and holy comforts. And, by this only argument, St. Paphnutius and St. Ephrem are reported in church-story to have converted two harlots from a course of dissolution to great sanctity and austerity.

[m] Aliquem habeat animus quem revereatur, cujus auctoritate etiam secretum tuum sanctius fiat. Quid prodest inclusam esse conscientiam? patemus Deo.—*Senec.* lib. i. ep. 11.

[n] Tiberius inter bona malaque mixtus, incolumi matre; intestabilis sævitiâ, sed obtectis libidinibus, dum Sejanum dilexit timuitve: postremò in scelera simul ac dedecora prorupit, postquam, remoto pudore et metu, suo tantùm ingenio utebatur.—*Tacit.* lib. vi. c. 51.

[o] Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο, πλὴν
Εἴδωλ', ὅσοιπερ ζῶμεν, ἢ κούφην σκιάν.
Τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν, ὑπέρκοπον
Μηδέν ποτ' εἴπῃς αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος.—*Sophocl.* Aj. 125.

33. But then this presence of God must not be a mere speculation of the understanding; though so only it is of very great benefit and immediate efficacy, yet it must reflect as well from the will as from discourse: and then only we walk in the presence of God, when by faith we behold him present, when we speak to him in frequent and holy prayers, when we beg aid from him in all our needs, and ask counsel of him in all our doubts, and before him bewail our sins, and tremble at his presence. This is an entire exercise of religion. And beside that the presence of God serves to all this, it hath also especial influence in the disimprovement of temptations, because it hath in it many things contrariant to the nature and efficacy of temptations; such as are consideration, reverence, spiritual thoughts, and the fear of God: for wherever this consideration is actual, there either God is highly despised, or certainly feared. In this case we are made to declare; for our purposes are concealed only in an incuriousness and inconsideration; but whoever considers God as present, will, in all reason, be as religious as in a temple, the reverence of which place custom or religion hath imprinted in the spirits of most men: so that, as Ahasuerus said of Haman, "Will he ravish the queen in my own house?" aggravating the crime by the incivility of the circumstance; God may well say to us, whose religion compels us to believe God everywhere present; since the Divine presence hath made all places holy, and every place hath a Numen in it, even the eternal God, we unhallow the place, and desecrate the ground whereon we stand, supported by the arm of God, placed in his heart, and enlightened by his eye, when we sin in so sacred a presence.

34. The second great instrument against temptation, is "meditation of death[p]." Raderus reports, that a certain virgin, to restrain the inordination of intemperate desires, which were like thorns in her flesh, and disturbed her spiritual peace, shut herself up in a sepulchre, and for twelve years dwelt in that scene of death. It were good we did so too, making tombs and coffins presential to us by frequent meditation. For God hath given us all a definitive arrest in Adam, and from it there lies no appeal; but it is infallibly

[p] Tota philosophia nihil est nisi meditatio mortis.—*Plato*.

and unalterably "appointed for all men once to die[q]," or to "be changed," to pass from hence to a condition of eternity, good or bad. Now, because this law is certain[r], and the time and the manner of its execution is uncertain, and from this moment eternity depends, and that after this life the final sentence is irrevocable, that all the pleasures here are sudden, transient, and unsatisfying, and vain; he must needs be a fool, that knows not to distinguish moments from eternity[s]: and since it is a condition of necessity, established by Divine decrees, and fixed by the indispensable laws of nature, that we shall, after a very little duration, pass on to a condition strange, not understood, then unalterable, and yet of great mutation from this, even of greater distance from that, in which we are here, than this is from the state of beasts; this, when it is considered, must, in all reason, make the same impression upon our understandings and affections, which naturally all strange things, and all great considerations, are apt to do; that is, create resolutions and results passing through the heart of man, such as are reasonable and prudent, in order to our own felicities, that we neglect the vanities of the present temptation, and secure our future condition, which will, till eternity itself expires, remain such as we make it to be by our deportment in this short transition and passage through the world.

35. And that this discourse is reasonable, I am therefore confirmed, because I find it to be to the same purpose used by the Spirit of God, and the wisest personages in the world. "My soul is always in my hand, therefore do I keep thy commandments[t]," said David: he looked upon himself as a dying person, and that restrained all his inordinations, and so he prayed, "Lord, teach me to number my days, that I may

[q] Μόνος θεῶν γὰρ Θάνατος οὐ δώρων ἐρᾷ· Οὐδ' ἄν τι θύσῃ, οὔτ' ἐπισπένδων ταῦς.—*Æschyl.*

Ἀθανασίας δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδ' ἂν συναγάγῃς Τὰ Ταντάλου τάλαντ' ἐκεῖνα λεγόμενα.—*Menand.*

Vita humana propè uti ferrum est: si exerceas, conteritur; si non exerceas, tamen rubigo interficit.—*Cato* apud *A. Gell.* lib. xi. c. 2.

[r] Ἥρὸς μὲν τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἀσφάλειάν ἐστι περίστασθαι· χρέων δὲ θανάτου, πάντες ἄνθρωποι ἀτεύχιστον πόλιν ἐκεῖμεν.—*Metrodor. Phil.*

[s] Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est. Per hoc spatium, quod ab infantiâ patet in senectutem, in aliam naturæ sumimur partem.—*Senec.* ep. 102.

[t] Psal. cxix. 109.

apply my heart unto wisdom[w]." And therefore the Egyptians used to serve up a skeleton to their feasts, that the dissolutions and vapours of wine might be restrained with that bunch of myrrh, and the vanities of their eyes chastized by that sad object: for they thought it unlikely a man should be transported far with any thing low or vicious[x], that looked long and often into the hollow eye-pits of a death's head, or dwelt in a charnel-house. And such considerations make all the importunity and violence of sensual desires to disband. For when a man stands perpetually at the door of eternity, and, as did John the almoner, every day is building of his sepulchre, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care, that the door leading to hell do not open upon us, that we be not crushed to ruin by the stones of our grave, and that our death become not a consignation to us to a sad eternity. For all the pleasures of the whole world[y], and in all its duration, cannot make recompense for one hour's torment in hell: and yet if wicked persons were to sit in hell for ever without any change of posture, or variety of torment beyond that session, it were insufferable beyond the endurance of nature: and therefore, where little less than infinite misery in an infinite duration shall punish the pleasures of sudden and transient crimes, the gain of pleasure, and the exchange of banks here for a condition of eternal and miserable death, is a permutation fit to be made by none but fools and desperate persons, who made no use of a reasonable soul, but that they, in their perishing, might be convinced of unreasonableness, and die by their own fault.

36. The use that wise men have made, when they reduced this consideration to practice, is, to believe every day to be the last of their life, for so it may be, and, for aught we know, it will; and then think what you would avoid, or what you would do, if you were dying, or were to-day to suffer death

[w] Psal. xc. 12.

[x] Θάνατος πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔστω σοι καθ' ἡμέραν, καὶ οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὐδὲ ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.—*Epict. Enchir.* cap. 28.

[y] Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, præter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.—*Hor.* lib. ii. od. 14.

by sentence and conviction; and that, in all reason, and in proportion to the strength of your consideration, you will do every day. For "that is the sublimity of wisdom, to do those things living, which are to be desired and chosen by dying persons[a]." An alarm of death, every day renewed, and pressed earnestly, will watch a man so tame and soft, that the precepts of religion will dwell deep in his spirit. But they "that make a covenant with the grave, and put the evil day far from them," they are the men that eat spiders and toads for meat greedily, and a temptation to them is as welcome as joy, and they seldom dispute the point in behalf of piety or mortification: for they that look upon death at distance, apprehend it not, but in such general lines and great representments that describe it only as future and possible, but nothing of its terrors or affrightments, or circumstances of advantage, are discernible by such an eye, that disturbs its sight, and discomposes the posture, that the object may seem another thing than what it is truly and really. St. Austin, with his mother Monica, was led one day by a Roman prætor to see the tomb of Cæsar. Himself thus describes the corpse. "It looked of a blue mould, the bone of the nose laid bare, the flesh of the nether lip quite fallen off, his mouth full of worms, and in his eye-pits two hungry toads feasting upon the remanent portion of flesh and moisture; and so he dwelt in his house of darkness[a]." And if every person, tempted by an opportunity of lust or intemperance, would choose such a room for his privacy, that company for his witness, that object to allay his appetite, he would soon find his spirit more sober, and his desires obedient[b]. I end this with the counsel of St. Bernard, "Let every man, in the first address to his actions, consider, whether, if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act, and whether he would not be infinitely troubled, that death should surprise him in the present dispositions, and then let him proceed accordingly." For, since "our treasure is in earthen vessels,"

[a] Hic est apex summæ sapientiæ, ea viventem facere, quæ morienti essent appetenda.

[a] Καὶ γὰς ἐγὼ σωθὶς εἰμι,
Νίνου μαγάλης βασιλεύσας. — *In Epitaph. Sardanapuli.*

[b] Ἤβρυος, φίλε θυμέ· τάχ' ἄν τινες ἄλλοι ἔσοντο Ἄνδρες, ἐγὼ δὲ θανὼν γαῖα μέλαινα ἔσομαι. — *Fragm. Theog. in Speculo Monach.*

which may be broken in pieces by the collision of ten thousand accidents, it were not safe to treasure up wrath in them; for if we do, we shall certainly drink it in the day of recompense.

37. Thirdly: Before, and in, and after all this, the blessed Jesus propounds prayer as a remedy against temptations: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation[c]." For, besides that prayer is the great instrument of obtaining victory by the grace of God, as a fruit of our desires, and of God's natural and essential goodness; the very praying against a temptation, if it be hearty, fervent, and devout, is a denying of it, and part of the victory: for it is a disclaiming the entertainment of it, it is a positive rejection of the crime; and every consent to it is a ceasing to pray, and to desire remedy. And we shall observe, that whensoever we begin to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, our prayers against it lessen, as the consent increases; there being nothing a more direct enemy to the temptation than prayer, which, as it is of itself a professed hostility against the crime, so it is a calling in auxiliaries from above to make the victory more certain. If temptation sets upon thee, do thou set upon God; for he is as soon overcome as thou art, as soon moved to good as thou art to evil; he is as quickly invited to pity thee as thou art to ask him[d]; provided thou dost not finally rest in the petition, but pass into action, and endeavour, by all means human and moral, to quench the flame newly kindled in thy bowels, before it come to devour the marrow of the bones. For a strong prayer, and a lazy, incurious, unobservant walking, are contradictions in the discourses of religion. Ruffinus[e] tells us a story of a young man solicited by the spirit of uncleanness, who came to an old religious person, and begged his prayers. It was in that age, when God used to answer prayers of very holy persons by more clear and familiar significations of his pleasure, than he knows now to be necessary. But after many earnest prayers sent up to the throne of grace, and the young man not at all

[c] Matth. xxvi. 41.

[d] ——— Hic levare functum
Pauperem laboribus
Vocatus atque non vocatus audit.—*Hor.* lib. ii. od. 18.

[e] Lib. iii. 13.

bettered, upon consideration and inquiry of particulars, he found the cause to be, because the young man relied so upon the prayers of the old eremite, that he did nothing at all to discountenance his lust, or contradict the temptation. But then he took another course, enjoined him austerities and exercises of devotion, gave him rules of prudence and caution, tied him to work and to stand upon his guard; and then the prayers returned in triumph, and the young man trampled upon his lust. And so shall I and you, by God's grace, if we pray earnestly and frequently, if we watch carefully that we be not surprised, if we be not idle in secret, nor talkative in public, if we read Scriptures, and consult with a spiritual guide, and make religion to be our work, that serving of God be the business of our life, and our designs be to purchase eternity; then we shall walk safely, or recover speedily, and, by doing advantages to piety, secure a greatness of religion, and spirituality to our spirits and understanding. But remember, that when Israel fought against Amalek, Moses's prayer and Moses's hand secured the victory, his prayer grew ineffectual when his hands were slack; to remonstrate to us, that we must co-operate with the grace of God, praying devoutly, and watching carefully, and observing prudently, and labouring with diligence and assiduity.

THE PRAYER.

Eternal and most merciful Father, I adore thy wisdom, providence, and admirable dispensation of affairs, in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus, that thou, who art infinitely good, dost permit so many sadnesses and dangers to discompose that order of things and spirits, which thou didst create innocent and harmless, and dost design to great and spiritual perfections; that the emanation of good from evil, by thy overruling power and excellences, may force glory to thee from our shame, and honour to thy wisdom, by these contradictory accidents and events. Lord, have pity upon me in these sad disorders, and with mercy know my infirmities. Let me, by suffering what thou pleasest, co-operate to the glorification of thy grace and magnifying thy mercy; but never let me consent to sin, but, with the power of thy majesty, and mightiness of thy prevailing

mercy, rescue me from those throngs of dangers and enemies, which daily seek to deflower that innocence, with which thou didst clothe my soul in the new birth. Behold, O God, how all the spirits of darkness endeavour the extinction of our hopes, and the dispersion of all those graces, and the prevention of all those glories, which the holy Jesus hath purchased for every loving and obedient soul. Our very meat and drink are full of poison, our senses are snares, our business is various temptation, our sins are inlets to more, and our good actions made occasions of sins. Lord, deliver me from the malice of the devil, from the fallacies of the world, from my own folly; that I be not devoured by the first, nor cheated by the second, nor betrayed by myself: but let thy grace, which is sufficient for me, be always present with me; let thy Spirit instruct me in the spiritual warfare, arming my understanding, and securing my will, and fortifying my spirit with resolutions of piety, and incentives of religion, and deleteries of sin; that the dangers I am encompassed withal, may become unto me an occasion of victory and triumph, through the aids of the Holy Ghost, and by the cross of the Lord Jesus, who hath, for himself and all his servants, triumphed over sin, and hell, and the grave, even all the powers of darkness, from which, by the mercies of Jesus, and the merits of his passion, now and ever, deliver me, and all thy faithful people. Amen.

DISCOURSE VI.

Of Baptism.

PART I.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus was to begin his prophetical office, and to lay the foundation of his church on the corner-stone, he first tempered the cement with water, and then with blood, and afterwards built it up by the hands of the Spirit: himself entered at that door, by which his disciples for ever after were to follow him; for therefore he went in at the

door of baptism, that he might hallow the entrance, which himself made to the house he was now building.

2. As it was in the old, so it is in the new creation; out of the waters God produced every living creature: and when at first "the Spirit moved upon the waters," and gave life, it was the type of what was designed in the renovation. Every thing that lives now, "is born of water and the Spirit;" and Christ, who is our Creator and Redeemer in the new birth, opened the fountains, and hallowed the stream: Christ, who is our Life, went down into the waters of baptism; and we, who descend thither, find the effects of life; it is living water, of which whoso drinks needs not to drink of it again, for "it shall be in him a well of water, springing up to life eternal [a]."

3. But because every thing is resolved into the same principles, from whence they are taken; the old world, which by the power of God came from the waters, by their own sin fell into the waters again, and were all drowned, and only eight persons were saved by an ark: and the world renewed upon the stock and reserves of that mercy consigned the sacrament of baptism in another figure; for then God gave his sign from heaven, that by water the world should never again perish; but he meant that they should be saved by water: for "baptism, which is a figure like to this, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ [b]."

4. After this the Jews report that the world took up the doctrine of baptisms, in remembrance that the iniquity of the old world was purged by water; and they washed all that came to the service of the true God, and, by that baptism, bound them to the observation of the precepts which God gave to Noah.

5. But when God separated a family for his own special service, he gave them a sacrament of initiation, but it was a sacrament of blood, the covenant of circumcision: and this was the forerunner of baptism, but not a type; when that was abrogated, this came into the place of it, and that consigned the same faith which this professes. But it could not properly be a type, whose nature is, by a likeness of matter

[a] John, iv. 14. [b] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

or ceremony, to represent the same mystery. Neither is a ceremony, as baptism truly is, properly capable of having a type; itself is but a type of a greater mysteriousness. And the nature of types is, in shadow to describe by dark lines a future substance[c]: so that, although circumcision might be a type of the effects and graces bestowed in baptism, yet of the baptism or ablution itself it cannot be properly, because of the unlikeness of the symbols and configurations, and because they are both equally distant from substances, which types are to consign and represent. The first bishops of Jerusalem, and all the Christian Jews for many years, retained circumcision together with baptism; and Christ himself, who was circumcised, was also baptized; and therefore it is not so proper to call circumcision a type of baptism: it was rather a seal and sign of the same covenant to Abraham, and the fathers, and to all Israel, as baptism is to all ages of the Christian church.

6. And because this rite could not be administered to all persons, and was not at all times after its institution, God was pleased by a proper and specific type to consign this rite of baptism, which he intended to all, and that for ever: and God, when the family of his church grew separate, notorious, numerous, and distinct, sent them into their own country by a baptism, through which the whole nation passed; for "all the fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea[d]," so by a double figure foretelling, that as they were initiated to Moses's law by the cloud above and the sea beneath, so should all the persons of the church, men, women, and children, be initiated unto Christ by the Spirit from above and the water below: for it was the design of the apostle in that discourse, to represent that the fathers and we were equal as to the privileges of the covenant; he proved that we do not exceed them, and it ought therefore to be certain, that they do not exceed us, nor their children ours.

7. But after this, something was to remain, which might not only consign the covenant, which God made with Abra-

[c] Umbra in lege, imago in evangelio, veritas in cœlo.—*S. Ambr.*

[d] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

ham, but be as a passage from the fathers, through the synagogue, to the church, from Abraham by Moses to Christ: and that was circumcision, which was a rite which God chose to be a mark to the posterity of Abraham, to distinguish them from the nations, which were not within the covenant of grace, and to be "a seal of the righteousness of faith," which God made to be the spirit and life of the covenant.

8. But because circumcision, although it was ministered to all the males, yet it was not to the females, although they and all the nation were baptized and initiated into "Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" therefore the children of Israel, by imitation of the patriarchs, the posterity of Noah, used also ceremonial baptisms to their women, and to their proselytes, and to all that were circumcised; and the Jews deliver, that Sarah and Rebecca, when they were adopted into the family of the church, that is, of Abraham and Isaac, were baptized: and so were all strangers that were married to the sons of Israel. And that we may think this to be typical of Christian baptism, the doctors of the Jews had a tradition, that when the Messias would come, there should be so many proselytes, that they could not be circumcised, but should be baptized. The tradition proved true, but not for their reason.

But that this rite of admitting into mysteries, and institutions, and offices of religion by baptisms, was used by the posterity of Noah, or at least very early among the Jews, besides the testimonies of their own doctors, I am the rather induced to believe, because the heathens had the same rite in many places, and in several religions: so they initiated disciples into the secrets of Mithra[e]; and the priests of Cotytto were called Baptæ, because by baptism they were admitted into the religion[f]; and they thought murder, incest, rapes, and the worst of crimes, were purged by dipping in the sea or fresh springs[g]; and a proselyte is called in Arrianus Βεβαμμένος, Intinctus, a baptized person.

9. But this ceremony of baptizing was so certain and

[e] Tertul. de Præscript. c. 40. [f] Scholiast. in Juv. Sat. ii. lib. 1.

[g] O nimiùm faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
Tolli flumineâ posse putatis aquâ.

usual among the Jews, in their admitting proselytes, and adopting into institutions, that to baptize and to make disciples are all one; and when John the Baptist, by an order from Heaven, went to prepare the way to the coming of our blessed Lord, he preached repentance, and baptized all that professed they did repent. He taught the Jews to live good lives, and baptized with the baptism of a prophet, such as was not unusually done by extraordinary and holy persons in the change or renewing of discipline or religion. Whether "John's baptism was from heaven, or of men," Christ asked the Pharisees. That it was from heaven the people therefore believed, because he was a prophet and a holy person: but it implies also, that such baptisms are sometimes from men, that is, used by persons of an eminent religion, or extraordinary fame for the gathering of disciples and admitting proselytes: and the disciples of Christ did so too[h]; even before Christ had instituted the sacrament for the Christian church, the disciples that came to Christ were baptized by his apostles.

10. And now we are come to the gates of baptism. All these, till John, were but types and preparatory baptisms, and John's baptism was but the prologue to the baptism of Christ. The Jewish baptisms admitted proselytes to Moses, and to the law of ceremonies; John's baptism called them to believe in the Messias now appearing, and to repent of their sins, to enter into the kingdom which was now at hand, and preached that repentance which should be for the remission of sins. His baptism remitted no sins[i], but preached and consigned repentance, which, in the belief of the Messias, whom he pointed to, should pardon sins. But because he was taken from his office before the work was completed, the disciples of Christ finished it; they went forth preaching the same sermon of repentance, and the approach of the kingdom, and baptized, or made proselytes or disciples, as John did; only they (as it is probable) baptized in the name of Jesus, which it is not so likely John

[h] John, iv. 2.

[i] Audi quid Scripturæ doceant: Joannis baptisma non tam peccata dimisit, quàm baptisma pœnitentiæ fuit in peccatorum remissionem, idque in futuram remissionem, quæ esset postea per sanctificationem Christi subsequuturа. — *Hieronym. adv. Luciferum.*

did. And this very thing might be the cause of the different forms of baptism recorded in the Acts[k], of "baptizing in the name of Jesus[l]," and at other times "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost[m];" the former being the manner of doing it in pursuance of the design of John's baptism, and the latter the form of institution by Christ for the whole Christian church, appointed after his resurrection; the disciples, at first, using promiscuously what was used by the same authority, though with some difference of mystery.

11. The holy Jesus having found his way ready prepared by the preaching of John, and by his baptism, and the Jewish manner of adopting proselytes and disciples into the religion, a way chalked out for him to initiate disciples into his religion, took what was so prepared, and changed it into a perpetual sacrament. He kept the ceremony, that they, who were led only by outward things, might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony which their nation always used in the like cases: and, therefore, without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit, and gave it a new grace, and a proper efficacy; he sublimed it to higher ends, and adorned it with stars of heaven; he made it to signify greater mysteries, to convey greater blessings, to consign the bigger promises, to cleanse deeper than the skin, and to carry proselytes farther than the gates of the institution. For so he was pleased to do in the other sacrament: he took the ceremony which he found ready in the custom of the Jews, where the major-domo, after the paschal supper, gave bread and wine to every person of his family; he changed nothing of it without, but transferred the rite to greater mysteries, and put his own spirit to their sign, and it became a sacrament evangelical. It was so also in the matter of excommunication, where the Jewish practice was made to pass into Christian discipline: without violence and noise "old things became new," while he fulfilled the law, making it up in full measures of the Spirit.

12. By these steps baptism passed on to a Divine evangelical institution, which we find to be consigned by three evangelists[n]: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations,

[k] Vide supra, Sect. ix. n. 1.
[l] Acts, viii. 16. Acts, ii. 38.
[m] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[n] Matt. xxviii. 19.

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It was one of the last commandments the holy Jesus gave upon the earth, when he taught his apostles "the things which concerned his kingdom." For "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved[o]: but "unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven[p];" agreeable to the decretory words of God by Abraham in the circumcision, to which baptism does succeed in the consignation of the same covenant, and the same spiritual promises[q], "The uncircumcised child, whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." The Manichees, Seleucus, Hermias, and their followers[r], people of a day's abode and small interest, but of malicious doctrine, taught baptism not to be necessary, not to be used, upon this ground; because they supposed, that it was proper to John to baptize with water, and reserved for Christ, as his peculiar, to "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Indeed Christ baptized none otherwise; he sent his Spirit upon the church in Pentecost, and baptized them with fire, the Spirit appearing like a flame: but he appointed his apostles to baptize with water, and they did so, and their successors after them, every where and for ever, not expounding, but obeying the preceptive words of their Lord, which were almost the last that he spake upon earth. And I cannot think it needful to prove this to be necessary, by any more arguments; for the words are so plain that they need no exposition: and yet if they had been obscure, the universal practice of the apostles, and the church, for ever, is a sufficient declaration of the commandment: no tradition is more universal, no, not of Scripture itself; no words are plainer, no, not the ten commandments: and if any suspicion can be superinduced, by any jealous or less discerning person, it will need no other refutation, but to turn his eyes to those lights, by which himself sees Scripture to be the word of God, and the commandments to be the declaration of his will.

13. But that which will be of greatest concernment in

[o] Mark, xvi. 16.
[p] John, iii. 5.
[q] Gen. xvii. 14.
[r] S. Aug. Hæres. 46, 59.

this affair, is, to consider the great benefits which are conveyed to us in this sacrament; for this will highly conclude, that the precept was for ever, which God so seconds with his grace and mighty blessings; and the susception of it necessary, because we cannot be without those excellent things, which are the graces of the sacrament.

14. First: The first fruit is, that "in baptism we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ," presented unto him, consigned with his sacrament, enter into his militia, give up our understandings and our choice to the obedience of Christ, and, in all senses that we can, become his disciples, witnessing a good confession, and undertaking a holy life: and therefore, in Scripture, *μαθητεύειν* and *βαπτίζειν* are conjoined in their significations, as they are in the mystery; it is a giving up our names to Christ, and it is part of the foundation, or the first principles, of the religion, as appears in St. Paul's catechism [s]; it is so the first thing, that it is for babes and neophytes, in which they are matriculated and adopted into the house of their Father, and taken into the hands of their mother. Upon this account, baptism is called in antiquity, "Ecclesiæ janua, porta gratiæ, et primus introitus sanctorum ad æternam Dei et ecclesiæ consuetudinem [t]: the gate of the church, the door of grace, the first entrance of the saints to an eternal conversation with God and the church." St. Bernard calls it, "Sacramentum initiationis, et intrantium Christianismum investituram; the sacrament of initiation, and the investiture of them that enter into the religion." And the person so entering is called *πεπεισμένος* and *συγκατατεθειμένος* [u], one of the religion, or a proselyte and convert, and one added to the number of the church, in imitation of that of St. Luke, *ὁ Κύριος προσετίθει σωζομένους τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ*, "God added to the church those that should be saved [x];" just as the church does to this day and for ever, baptizing infants and catechumens: *σωζόμενοι προστίθενται*, they are added to the church, that they may be added to the Lord, and the number of the inhabitants of heaven.

15. Secondly: The next step beyond this is "adoption into the covenant [y]," which is an immediate consequent of the

[s] Heb. vi. 1.
[t] S. August. lib. ii. c. 1. de Cat. Rudib.
[u] Just. Martyr. Apol. 2.
[x] Acts, ii. 47.
[y] *Τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ υἱοθεσίας χάριν τυγχάνειν.* — *Cyril. Hierosol. Catec.* 2.

first presentation; this being the first act of man, that the first act of God. And this is called by St. Paul, a being "baptized in one Spirit into one body [z]," that is, we are made capable of the communion of saints, the blessings of the faithful, the privileges of the church: by this we are, as St. Luke calls it, τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον [a], ordained, or disposed, "put into the order of eternal life," being made members of the mystical body, under Christ our Head.

16. Thirdly: And therefore "baptism is a new birth," by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom: and this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit [b];" and it is by St. Paul called λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας [c], "the laver of regeneration;" for now we begin to be reckoned in a new census, or account; God is become our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Spirit "the earnest of our inheritance," the church our mother; our food is the body and blood of our Lord, faith is our learning, religion our employment, and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and the mighty price of our high calling [d]. And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall, with them, enter into the portion of our inheritance. And, therefore, the primitive Christians, who consigned all their affairs, and goods, and writings, with some marks of their Lord, usually writing Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ υἱὸς, Σωτὴρ, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour," made it an abbreviature by writing only the capitals, thus, I. X. Θ. Υ. Σ, which the heathens, in mockery and derision, made Ἰχθὺς, which signifies a fish, and they used it for Christ, as a name of reproach: but the Christians owned the name, and turned it into a pious metaphor, and were content that they should enjoy their pleasure in the acrostic; but upon that occasion Tertullian speaks pertinently to this article, "Nos pisciculi, secundùm *ἰχθὺν* nostrum

[z] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[a] Acts, xiii. 40.
[b] John, iii. 5.
[c] Titus, iii. 5.
[d] Διὰ βαπτισμὸν ἐχχὴ ἑτέρου βίου γίνεται ἡμῖν, ἡ παλιγγενεσία, καὶ σφραγὶς, καὶ φυλακτήριον, καὶ φωτισμός.—*Damasc.* lib. iv. *Orth. Fid.* c. 10.

Jesum Christum, in aquâ nascimur[e]; Christ, whom you call a fish, we acknowledge to be our Lord and Saviour; and we, if you please, are the little fishes; for we are born in water, thence we derive our spiritual life." And because from henceforward we are a new creation, the church uses to assign new relations to the catechumens, spiritual fathers, and susceptors; and, at their entrance into baptism, the Christians and Jewish proselytes did use to cancel all secular affections to their temporal relatives. "Nec quicquam priùs imbuuntur quàm contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes, liberos, fratres vilia habere[f]," said Tacitus of the Christians: which was true in the sense only that Christ said, "He that doth not hate father and mother for my sake, is not worthy of me;" that is, he that doth not hate them *præ me*, rather than forsake me, forsake them, is unworthy of me.

17. Fourthly: "In baptism all our sins are pardoned," according to the words of a prophet, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness[g]." "The catechumen descends into the font a sinner, he arises purified; he goes down the son of death, he comes up the son of the resurrection; he enters-in the son of folly and prevarication, he returns the son of reconciliation; he stoops down the child of wrath, and ascends the heir of mercy; he was the child of the devil, and now he is the servant and the son of God." They are the words of Ven. Bede concerning this mystery[h]. And this was ingeniously signified by that Greek inscription upon a font, which is so prettily contrived, that the words may be read after the Greek or after the Hebrew manner, and be exactly the same; ΝΙΨΟΝ ΑΝΟΜΗΜΑ, ΜΗ ΜΟΝΑΝ ΟΨΙΝ, "Lord, wash my sin, and not my face only." And so it is intended and promised: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, and call on the name of the Lord[i]," said Ananias to Saul; for "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, with the washing of water in the word[k];" that is, baptism in the Christian religion: and, therefore, Tertullian calls baptism

[e] Lib. de Baptis. c. 1. [f] Lib. 5. Hist.

[g] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Πιστεύω ἓν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν.—*Symb. Nicen.*

[h] Lib. i. c. 3. in Joann. [i] Acts, xxii. 16. [k] Eph. v. 26.

" lavacrum compendiatum[l]," a compendious laver, that is, an entire cleansing the soul in that one action justly and rightly performed. In the rehearsal of which doctrine it was not an unpleasant etymology, that Anastasius Sinaita gave of baptism, *βάπτισμα*, quasi *βάπταισμα, ἐν ᾧ βάλλεται, ἤγουν πίπτει, τὸ πταῖσμα,* " in which our sins are thrown off;" and they fall like leeches when they are full of blood and water, or like the chains from St. Peter's hands at the presence of the angel. Baptism is *ἀνεκλόγιστος ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν,* an entire full forgiveness of sins, so that they shall never be called again to scrutiny.

" ——— Omnia dæmonis arma
His merguntur aquis, quibus ille renascitur infans,
Qui captivus erat ——— [m]."

The captivity of the soul is taken away by the blood of redemption, and the fiery darts of the devil are quenched by these salutary waters; and what the flames of hell are expiating or punishing to eternal ages, that is washed off quickly in the holy font, and an eternal debt paid in an instant. For so sure as the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, so sure are our sins washed in this holy flood: for this is a red sea too: these waters signify the blood of Christ: " These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb[n]." *Τὸ αἷμα καθαρίζει, τὸ ὕδωρ καθαρίζει, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἁγνίζει· τὸ αἷμα διὰ πνεύματος, τὸ πνεῦμα διὰ ὕδατος,* " The blood of Christ cleanseth us, the water cleanseth us, the Spirit purifies us; the blood by the Spirit, the Spirit by the water[o]," all in baptism, and in pursuance of that baptismal state. These three are they that " bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood;"

[l] Lib. v. adv. Marc. c. 9. *Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καλά.* — *Gr. Prov.*

Annon ità credimus, quia omne genus peccati, cùm ad salutare lavacrum venimus, aufertur. — *Origen. Hom.* 15. *in Jesu.*

Ecce quicquid iniquitatum sempiternus ignis excoquere et expiare vix posset, subitò sacro fonte submersum est, et de æternis debitis brevissimo lavacri compendio cum indulgentissimo creditore transactum est. — *Ambros.* lib. i. cap. 7. *de Pœnit.*

Qui dicit peccata in baptismo non funditus dimitti, dicat in Mari Rubro Ægyptios non veraciter mortuos. — *S. Greg. M.* lib. ix. ep. 39.

[m] Arator, lib. ii. Hist. Apostol. [n] Rev. vii. 14.

[o] 1 John, i. 7. Acts, xxii. 16. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. ix. 14.

καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσι, "these three agree in one," or are to one purpose[p]; they agree in baptism, and in the whole pursuance of the assistances which a Christian needs all the days of his life. And therefore St. Cyrill calls baptism, τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον, "the antitype of the passions of Christ." It does preconsign the death of Christ, and does the infancy of the work of grace, but not weakly; it brings from death to life; and though it brings us but to the birth in the new life, yet that is a greater change than is in all the periods of our growth to manhood, to "a perfect man in Christ Jesus."

18. Fifthly: Baptism does not only pardon our sins, but puts us into a state of pardon for the time to come. For baptism is the beginning of the new life, and an admission of us into the evangelical covenant, which on our parts consists in a sincere and timely endeavour to glorify God by faith and obedience; and on God's part, he will pardon what is past, assist us for the future, and not measure us by grains and scruples, or exact our duties by the measure of an angel, but by the span of a man's hand. So that by baptism we are consigned to the mercies of God and the graces of the Gospel; that is, that our pardon be continued, and our piety be a state of repentance. And therefore that baptism, which in the Nicene creed we profess to be for "the remission of sins," is called in the Jerusalem creed, "the baptism of repentance;" that is, it is the entrance of a new life, the gate to a perpetual change and reformation, all the way continuing our title to, and hopes of, forgiveness of sins. And this excellence is clearly recorded by St. Paul: "The kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man hath appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done[q]:" that is, the formality of the Gospel covenant, not to be exacted by the strict measures of the law: "but according to his mercy he saved us," that is, by gentleness and remissions, by pitying and pardoning us, by relieving and supporting us; because "he remembers that we are but dust." And all this mercy we are admitted to, and is conveyed to us, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας, "by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." And this plain, evident doctrine, was ob-

[p] 1 John, v. 8. [q] Tit. iii. 4, 5.

served, explicated, and urged against the Messalians, who said that baptism was like a razor; that cuts away all the sins that were past, or presently adhering, but not the sins of our future life: *Οὐδὲ γὰρ τοῦτο μόνον ἐπαγγέλλεται τὸ μυστήριον, ἀλλὰ τὰ τούτων μείζω καὶ τελειότερα· ἀῤῥαβὼν γάρ ἐστι τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῆς ἐσομένης ἀναστάσεως τύπος, καὶ κοινωνία τῶν δεσποτικῶν παθημάτων, καὶ μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, καὶ ἱμάτιον σωτηρίου, καὶ χιτὼν εὐφροσύνης, καὶ στολὴ φωτοειδὴς, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ φῶς*[r]. "This sacrament promises more and greater things; it is the earnest of future good things, the type of the resurrection, the communication of the Lord's passion, the partaking of his resurrection, the robe of righteousness, the garment of gladness, the vestment of light, or rather light itself." And for this reason it is that baptism is not to be repeated, because it does at once all that it can do at an hundred times; for it admits us to the condition of repentance and evangelical mercy; to a state of pardon for our infirmities and sins, which we timely and effectually leave; and this is a thing that can be done but once, as a man can begin but once. He that hath once entered in at this gate of life, is always in possibility of pardon, if he be in a possibility of working and doing, after the manner of a man, that which he hath promised to the Son of God. And this was expressly delivered and observed by St. Austin[s]: "That which the apostle says, 'Cleansing him with the washing of water in the word,' is to be understood, that in the same laver of regeneration and word of sanctification, all the evils of the regenerate are cleansed and healed; not only the sins that are past, which are all now remitted in baptism, but also those that are contracted afterwards by human ignorance and infirmity: not that baptism be repeated as often as we sin[t], but because by this, which is once administered, is brought to pass, that pardon of all sins, not only of those that are past, but also those which will be committed afterwards, is obtained." The Messalians denied this, and it was part of their heresy in the undervaluing of baptism; and for it they are most excellently confuted by Isidore Pelusiot, in his third

[r] Theodor. Ep. de div. Decr. cap. de Bapt.
[s] Lib. de Nuptiis, c. 25, &c. Tract. 124. in Joan.
[t] Vide Salmer, tom. xiii. p. 487.

book, epistle 195, to the Count Hermin, whither I refer the reader.

19. In proportion to this doctrine it is, that the holy Scripture calls upon us to live a holy life, in pursuance of this grace of baptism. And St. Paul recalls the lapsed Galatians to their covenant, and the grace of God stipulated in baptism: "Ye are all children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ[u];" that is, "heirs of the promise, and Abraham's seed;" that promise which cannot be disannulled, increased, or diminished, but is the same to us as it was to Abraham, the same before the law and after. Therefore do not you hope to be "justified by the law;" for you are entered into the covenant of faith, and are to be justified thereby. This is all your hope; by this you must stand for ever, or you cannot stand at all; but by this you may: for "you are God's children by faith," that is, not by the law, or the covenant of works. And that you may remember whence you are going, and return again, he proves that they are the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, because they "have been baptized into Christ[x]," and so "put on Christ." This makes you children, and such as are "to be saved by faith," that is, a covenant, "not of works," but of pardon in Jesus Christ, the author and establisher of this covenant. For this is the covenant made in baptism, that "being justified by his grace, we shall be heirs of life eternal: for by grace," that is, by favour, remission, and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, "ye are saved." This is the only way that we have of being justified, and this must remain as long as we are in hopes of heaven; for besides this we have no hopes: and all this is stipulated and consigned in baptism, and is of force after our fallings into sin and risings again. In pursuance of this, the same apostle declares, that the several states of sin are so many recessions from the state of baptismal grace; and if we arrive to the direct apostacy, and renouncing of, or a contradiction to, the state of baptism, we are then unpardonable, because we are fallen from our state of pardon. This St. Paul conditions most strictly, in his epistle to the Hebrews: "This is the covenant I will make in those days; I will put my laws in their hearts; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no

[u] Gal. iii. 26, 29. [x] Ver. 27.

more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin[y];" that is, our sins are so pardoned, that we need "no more oblation;" we are then made partakers of the death of Christ, which we afterwards renew in memory, and eucharist, and representment. But the great work is done in baptism; for so it follows, "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, that is, by the veil of his flesh," his incarnation. But how do we enter into this? Baptism is the door, and the ground of this confidence for ever: for so he adds, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This is the consignation of this blessed state, and the gate to all this mercy. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith[z]," that is, the religion of a Christian, the faith into which we were baptized; for, that is the faith that justifies and saves us: let us therefore hold fast this profession of this faith, and do all the intermedial works, in order to the conservation of it; such as are, assembling in the communion of saints, (the use of the word and sacrament is included in the precept,) mutual exhortation, good example[a], and the like: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth," that is, if we sin against the profession of this faith, and hold it not fast, but let the faith and the profession go wilfully, which afterwards he calls "a treading under foot the Son of God, accounting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing," and "a doing despite to the Spirit of grace," viz. which moved upon those waters, and did illuminate him in baptism; if we do this, "there is no more sacrifice for sins," no more deaths of Christ, into which you may be baptized; that is, you are fallen from the state of pardon and repentance, into which you were admitted in baptism, and in which you continue so long as you have not quitted your baptismal rights and the whole covenant. Contrary to this is that which St. Peter calls "making our calling and election sure," that is, a doing all that which may continue us in our state of baptism and the grace of the covenant. And between these two

[y] Heb. x. 16, 19, 29. [z] τῆς ἐλπίδος. scil. ad futurum respiciens.
[a] ἐπισυναγωγὴ, παράκλησις, κατανύξις.

states, of absolute apostacy from, and entirely adhering to and securing, this state of calling and election, are all the intermedial sins, and being overtaken in single faults, or declining towards vicious habits, which in their several proportions are degrees of danger and insecurity; which St. Peter calls λήθην καθαρισμοῦ τῶν πάλαι αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν, "a forgetting our baptism, or purification from our sins[b]." And in this sense are those words, "The just shall live by faith," that is, by that profession which they made in baptism; from which if they swerve not, they shall be supported in their spiritual life. It is a grace which, by virtue of the covenant consigned in baptism, does, like a centre, transmit effluxes to all the periods and portions of our life; our whole life, all the periods of our succeeding hopes, are kept alive by this. This consideration is of great use, besides many other things, to reprove the folly of those, who in the primitive church deferred their baptism till their death-bed; because baptism is a laver of sanctification, and drowns all our sins, and buries them in the grave of our Lord, they thought they might sin securely upon the stock of an after-baptism; for unless they were strangely prevented by a sudden accident, a death-bed baptism they thought would secure their condition: but early some of them durst not take it, much less in the beginning of their years, that they might at least gain impunity for their follies and heats of their youth. Baptism hath influence into the pardon of all our sins, committed in all the days of our folly and infirmity; and so long as we have not been baptized, so long we are out of the state of pardon: and therefore an early baptism is not to be avoided, upon this mistaken fancy and plot upon Heaven; it is the greater security towards the pardon of our sins, if we have taken it in the beginning of our days.

20. Sixthly: The next benefit of baptism, which is also a verification of this, is "a sanctification of the baptized person by the Spirit of grace."

> Sanctus in hunc cælo descendit Spiritus amnem,
> Cœlestique sacras fonte maritat aquas:
> Concipit unda Deum, sanctamque liquoribus almis
> Edit ab æterno semine progeniem[c].

[b] 2 Pet. i. 9. Vide Part II. Disc. 9, of Repentance, num. 9. ad 31.
[c] Paul. Ep. 12. ad Serenum.

The Holy Ghost descends upon the waters of baptism, and makes them prolific, apt to produce children unto God: and therefore St. Leo compares the font of baptism to the womb of the blessed Virgin, when it was replenished with the Holy Spirit. And this is the baptism of our dearest Lord: his ministers baptize with water; our Lord at the same time verifies their ministry with giving the Holy Spirit. They are joined together by St. Paul: "We are, by one Spirit, baptized into one body[d];" that is, admitted into the church, by baptism of water and the Spirit. This is that which our blessed Lord calls "a being born of water and of the Spirit[e]." By water we are sacramentally dead and buried, by the Spirit we are made alive. But because these are mysterious expressions, and, according to the style of Scripture, high and secret in spiritual significations, therefore, that we may understand what these things signify, we must consider it by its real effects, and what it produces upon the soul of a man.

21. First: It is the suppletory of original righteousness, by which Adam was at first gracious with God, and which he lost by his prevarication. It was in him a principle of wisdom and obedience, a relation between God and himself, a title to the extraordinary mercies of God, and a state of friendship. When he fell, he was discomposed in all; the links of the golden chain and blessed relation were broken; and it so continued in the whole life of man, which was stained with the evils of this folly and the consequent mischiefs. And therefore, when we began the world again, entering into the articles of a new life, God gave us his Spirit, to be an instrument of our becoming gracious persons, and of being in a condition of obtaining that supernatural end which God at first designed to us. And therefore, as our baptism is a separation of us from unbelieving people; so the descent of the Holy Spirit upon us, in our baptism, is a consigning or marking us for God, as the sheep of his pasture, as the soldiers of his army, as the servants of his household. We are so separated from the world, that we are appropriated to God; so that God expects of us duty and obedience; and all sins are acts of rebellion and undutifulness. Of this

[d] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [e] John, iii. 5. S. Basil. de Spir. S. c. 15.

nature was the sanctification of Jeremiah, and John the Baptist, from their mothers' womb; that is, God took them to his own service, by an early designation, and his Spirit marked them to a holy ministry. To this also relates that of St. Paul, whom God by a decree separated from his mother's womb, to the ministry of the Gospel: the decree did antedate the act of the Spirit, which did not descend upon him until the day of his baptism. What these persons were, in order to exterior ministries, that all the faithful are, in order to faith and obedience; consigned in baptism, by the Spirit of God, to a perpetual relation to God, in a continual service and title to his promises. And in this sense the Spirit of God is called σφραγὶς, a seal[f], "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise[g]:" τὸ μὲν ὕδωρ καθαίρει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα σφραγίζει τὴν ψυχήν "The water washes the body, and the Spirit seals the soul," viz. to a participation of those promises which he hath made, and to which we receive a title by our baptism.

22. Secondly: The second effect of the Spirit is light or illumination; that is, the Holy Spirit becomes unto us the author of holy thoughts and firm persuasions, and "sets to his seal that the word of God is true," into the belief of which we are then baptized, and makes faith to be a grace, and the understanding resigned, and the will confident, and the assent stronger than the premises, and the propositions to be believed, because they are beloved; and we are taught the ways of godliness after a new manner, that is, we are made to perceive the secrets of the kingdom, and to love religion, and to long for heaven and heavenly things, and to despise the world, and to have new resolutions, and new perceptions, and new delicacies, in order to the establishment of faith, and its increments and perseverance. Τῇ λαμπούσῃ ψυχῇ ἀπὸ κατακλυσμοῦ ἀνιδρυθεὶς ὁ Θεὸς, οἱονεὶ θρόνον ἀυτὴν ἑαυτῷ κατεργάζει[h] "God sits in the soul, when it is illuminated in baptism, as if he sat in his throne;" that is, he rules by a firm persuasion, and entire principles of obedience. And therefore baptism is called in Scripture, φωτισμὸς, and the baptized φωτισθέντες, illuminated: "Call to mind the former days,

[f] 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. iv. 30. John, vi. 27.
[g] Eph. i. 13. S. Cyril. Hieros. Catec. 3.
[h] S. Basil. in Psal. xxviii.

in which you were illuminated[i]." And the same phrase is in the sixth to the Hebrews[k], where the parallel places expound each other. For that which St. Paul calls ἅπαξ φωτισθέντες, "once illuminated," he calls after, λαβόντες τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, "a receiving the knowledge of the truth:" and that you may perceive this to be wholly meant of baptism, the apostle expresses it still by synonymas: "Tasting of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience, and washed in our bodies with pure water[l];" all which also are a syllabus or collection of the several effects of the graces bestowed in baptism. But we are now instancing in that which relates most properly to the understanding, in which respect the Holy Spirit also is called anointing or unction; and the mystery is explicated by St. John: "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things[m]."

23. Thirdly: The Holy Spirit descends upon us in baptism, to become the principle of a new life, to become a holy seed, springing up to holiness; and is called by St. John, σπέρμα Θεοῦ, "the seed of God[n]:" and the purpose of it we are taught by him: "Whosoever is born of God," (that is, he that is regenerated and entered into this new birth,) "doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The Spirit of God is the Spirit of life; and now that he, by the Spirit, is born anew, he hath in him that principle, which, if it be cherished, will grow up to life, to life eternal. And this is "the Spirit of sanctification, the victory over the world," the deletery of concupiscence, the life of the soul, and the perpetual principle of grace sown in our spirits, in the day of our adoption to be the sons of God, and members of Christ's body. But take this mystery in the words of St. Basil[o]: "There are two ends proposed in baptism; to wit, to abolish the body of sin, that we may no more bring forth fruit unto death; and to live in the Spirit, and to have our fruit to sanctification. The water represents the image of death, receiving the body

[i] Heb. x. 32. [k] Ver. 4. [l] Heb. vi. 4.
[m] 1 John, ii. 20, 27. [n] 1 John, iii. 9. [o] Lib. de Spir. S. c. 18.

in its bosom, as in a sepulchre; but the quickening Spirit sends upon us a vigorous δύναμιν, power or efficacy, even from the beginning renewing our souls from the death of sin unto life: for as our mortification is perfected in the water, so the Spirit works life in us." To this purpose is the discourse of St. Paul: having largely discoursed of our being baptized into the death of Christ, he adds this as the corollary of all[p]; "He that is dead[q] is freed from sin;" that is, being mortified and buried[r] in the waters of baptism, we have a new life of righteousness put into us, we are quitted from the dominion of sin, and are planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection[s], that henceforth we should not serve sin[t].

24. Fourthly: But all these intermedial blessings tend to a glorious conclusion, for baptism does also consign us to a holy resurrection. It takes the sting of death from us, by burying us together with Christ; and takes off sin, which is the sting of death: and then we shall be partakers of a blessed resurrection. This we are taught by St. Paul: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection[u]." That declares the real event in its due season. But because baptism consigns it, and admits us to a title to it, we are said, with St. Paul, to be "risen with Christ in baptism; buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, which hath raised him from the dead[x]." Which expression I desire to be remembered, that by it we may better understand those other sayings of the apostle, of "putting on Christ in baptism, putting on the new man," &c. for these only signify ἐπιχείρημα, or the design on God's part, and the endeavour and duty on man's. We are then consigned to our duty, and to our reward; we undertake one, and have a title to the other. And though men of ripeness and reason enter instantly into their portion of work, and have present use of the assistances, and something of their reward in hand; yet we cannot conclude, that those

[p] Rom. vi. 7.
[q] χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτεννῦναι.—*Plutarch.*
[r] Ibid. ver. 4.
[s] Ver. 5.
[t] Ver. 6. Vide Disc. 9, of Repentance, n. 46.
[u] Rom. vi. 3, 5.
[x] Col. ii. 12.

that cannot do it presently, are not baptized rightly, because they are not in capacity to "put on the new man" in righteousness, that is, in an actual holy life; for they may "put on the new man" in baptism, just as "they are risen with Christ:" which, because it may be done by faith before it is done in real event, and it may be done by sacrament and design before it be done by a proper faith; so also may our putting on the new man be; it is done sacramentally, and that part, which is wholly the work of God, does only antedate the work of man, which is to succeed in its due time, and is after the manner of preventing grace. But this is by the bye. In order to the present article, baptism is by Theodoret called μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, "a participation of the Lord's resurrection."

25. Fifthly and lastly: "By baptism we are saved:" that is, we are brought from death to life here, and that is "the first resurrection;" and we are brought from death to life hereafter, by virtue of the covenant of the state of grace, into which in baptism we enter, and are preserved from the second death, and receive a glorious and an eternal life. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved[y]," said our blessed Saviour; and, "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost[z]."

26. After these great blessings, so plainly testified in Scripture and the doctrine of the primitive church, which are regularly consigned and bestowed in baptism, I shall less need to descend to temporal blessings, or rare contingencies, or miraculous events, or probable notices of things less certain. Of this nature are those stories recorded in the writings of the church[a], that Constantine was cured of a leprosy in baptism; Theodosius recovered of his disease, being baptized by the bishop of Thessalonica; and a paralytic Jew was cured as soon as he became a Christian, and was baptized by Atticus of Constantinople; and bishop Arnulph baptizing a leper, also cured him, said Vincentius Bellovacensis. It is more considerable, which is generally and piously believed by very many eminent persons in the church, that, at our baptism, God assigns an angel-guardian, (for then the catechumen, being made a servant and a brother to the Lord of angels, is sure not to want

[y] Mark, xvi. 16. [z] Titus, iii. 5.
[a] Niceph. lib. vii. c. 35. Socr. lib. v. c. 6. Idem, lib. vii. c. 7.

the aids of them who "pitch their tents round about them that fear the Lord[b]") and that this guard and ministry is then appointed when themselves are admitted into the inheritance of the promises: and their title to salvation is hugely agreeable to the words of St. Paul, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation[c]?" where it appears, that the title to the inheritance is the title to this ministry, and therefore must begin and end together. But I insist not on this, though it seems to me hugely probable. All these blessings put into one syllabus, have given to baptism many honourable appellatives in Scripture and other divine writers[d], calling it ἀναγέννησιν, παλιγγενεσίαν, ὄχημα πρὸς Θεὸν, ὄχημα πρὸς οὐρανὸν, βασιλείας πρόξενον, τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, μεγάλην περιτομὴν ἀχειροποίητον, ἀναπαίνωσιν, ἐπερώτημα, ἀῤῥαβῶνα, ἐνέχυρον, ἀπόδειξιν, ἀνάκτισιν, ἔνδυμα φωτεινὸν, sacramentum vitæ et æternæ salutis: "A new birth, a regeneration, a renovation, a chariot carrying us to God, the great circumcision, a circumcision made without hands, the key of the kingdom, the paranymph of the kingdom, the earnest of our inheritance, the answer of a good conscience, the robe of light, the sacrament of a new life and of eternal salvation." Ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ· This is celestial water, springing from the sides of the rock upon which the church was built, when the rock was smitten with the rod of God.

27. It remains now that we inquire what concerns our duty, and in what persons, or in what dispositions, baptism produces all these glorious effects: for the sacraments of the church work in the virtue of Christ, but yet only upon such as are servants of Christ, and hinder not the work of the Spirit of grace. For the water of the font, and the Spirit of the sacrament, are indeed to wash away our sins, and to purify our souls; but not unless we have a mind to be purified. The sacrament works pardon for them, that hate their sin, and procures grace for them that love it. They that are guilty of sins, must repent of them, and renounce them, and they must make a profession of the faith of Christ, and give, or be given, up to the obedience of Christ; and then they are rightly disposed. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall

[b] Psal. xxxiv. 7. [c] Heb. i. 14.

[d] Basil. Theod. Epiphan. Nazianc. Col. ii. 2. Cyril. Hieros. Dionys. Areop. Aug. lib. ii. c. 13. contra Crescon. Gram.

be saved[e]," saith Christ; and St. Peter called out to the whole assembly, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you[f]." Concerning this, Justin Martyr[g] gives the same account of the faith and practice of the church; Ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι καὶ πιστεύωσιν, &c. "Whosoever are persuaded, and believe those things to be true, which are delivered and spoken by us, and undertake to live accordingly, they are commanded to fast and pray, and to ask of God remission of their former sins, we also praying together with them, and fasting. Then they are brought to us where water is, and are regenerated in the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves are regenerated." For in baptism, St. Peter observes, there are two parts, the body and the spirit: that is, σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥυπου, "the putting away the filth of the flesh[h]," that is, the material washing; and this is baptism no otherwise than a dead corpse is a man: the other is συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα, "the answer of a good conscience towards God," that is, the conversion of the soul to God; that is the effective disposition in which baptism does save us. And in the same sense are those sayings of the primitive doctors to be understood, "Anima non lavatione, sed responsione sancitur[i]," the soul is not healed by washing (viz.) alone, but by the answer, the ἐπερώτημα in St. Peter, the correspondent of our part of the covenant: for that is the perfect sense of this unusual expression. And the effect is attributed to this, and denied to the other, when they are distinguished. So Justin Martyr affirms: "The only baptism that can heal us, is repentance, and the knowledge of God. For what need is there of that baptism, that can only cleanse the flesh and the body? Be washed in your flesh from wrath and covetousness, from envy and hatred; and behold the body is pure[k]." And Clemens Alexandrinus, upon that proverbial saying, Ἴσθι μὴ λουτρῷ, ἀλλὰ νῷ καθαρὸς, "Be not pure in the laver, but in the mind," adds, "I suppose that an exact and a firm repentance is a sufficient purification to a man; if judging and considering ourselves for the facts we have done before, we proceed to that which is before us, considering that which follows, and cleansing or washing our mind from sensual affections, and from former sins." Just as we use to deny the effect to the instrumental

[e] Mark, xvi. 16. [f] Acts, ii. 38. [g] Apol. ad Anton. Cæs.
[h] 1 Pet. iii. 21. [i] Tert. de Res. Carn. [k] Ad Tryphon Jud.

cause, and attribute it to the principal, in the manner of speaking, when our purpose is to affirm this to be the principal, and of chief influence. So we say, it is not the good lute, but the skilful hand, that makes the music: it is not the body, but the soul, that is the man: and yet he is not the man without both. For baptism is but the material part in the sacrament, "it is the Spirit that giveth life;" whose work is faith and repentance, begun by himself without the sacrament, and consigned in the sacrament, and actuated and increased in the co-operation of our whole life. And therefore baptism is called in the Jerusalem creed, ἓν βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, "one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:" and by Justin Martyr[l], λουτρὸν τῆς μετανοίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὃ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀνομίας τῶν λαῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ γέγονεν, "the baptism of repentance, and the knowledge of God, which was made for the sins of the people of God." He explains himself a little after, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ μόνον καθαρίσαι τουτὸ μετανοήσαντας δυνάμενον, "baptism that can only cleanse them that are penitent." "In sacramentis Trinitati occurrit fides credentium et professio, quæ apud acta conficitur angelorum, ubi miscentur cœlestia et spiritualia semina; ut sancto germine nova possit renascentium indoles procreari, ut dum Trinitas cum fide concordat, qui natus fuerit seculo, renascatur spiritualiter Deo. Sic fit hominum Pater Deus, sancta fit mater ecclesia," said Optatus[m]. "The faith and profession of the believers meets with the ever-blessed Trinity, and is recorded in the register of angels, where heavenly and spiritual seeds are mingled; that from so holy a spring may be produced a new nature of the regeneration, that while the Trinity (viz. that is invocated upon the baptized) meets with the faith of the catechumen, he that was born to the world, may be born spiritually to God. So God is made a Father to the man, and the holy church a mother." Faith and repentance strip the old man naked, and make him fit for baptism; and then the Holy Spirit, moving upon the waters, cleanses the soul, and makes it to put on the new man, who grows up to perfection and a spiritual life, to a life of glory, by our verification of our undertaking in baptism on our part, and the graces of the Spirit on the other. For the waters pierce

[l] Dial. dum Tryph. [m] Lib. ii. adv. Parm.

no farther than the skin, till the person puts off his affection to the sin that he hath contracted; and then he may say, "Aquæ intraverunt usque ad animam meam," "The waters are entered even unto my soul, to purify and cleanse it, by the washing of water, and the renewing by the Holy Spirit." The sum is this[n]: Βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υἱοποιούμεθα, υἱοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀθανατιζόμεθα· "Being baptized we are illuminated, being illuminated we are adopted to the inheritance of sons, being adopted we are promoted towards perfection, and being perfected we are made immortal."

Quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat indè
Semideus, tactis citò nobilitetur in undis.

28. This is the whole doctrine of baptism, as it is in itself considered, without relation to rare circumstances or accidental cases: and it will also serve to the right understanding of the reasons, why the church of God hath, in all ages, baptized all persons that were within her power, for whom the church could stipulate, that they were, or might be, relatives of Christ, sons of God, heirs of the promises, and partners of the covenant, and such as did not hinder the work of baptism upon their souls. And such were not only persons of age and choice, but the infants of Christian parents. For the understanding and verifying of which truth, I shall only need to apply the parts of the former discourse to their particular case, premising first these propositions.

Of baptizing Infants.

PART II.

1. BAPTISM is the key in Christ's hand, and therefore opens as he opens, and shuts by his rule: and as Christ himself did not do all his blessings and effects unto every one, but gave to every one as they had need; so does baptism. Christ did not cure all men's eyes, but them only that were blind;

[n] Clem. Alex. lib. i. Pædag. c. 6.

"Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance:" that is, they that lived in the fear of God, according to the covenant in which they were debtors, were indeed improved and promoted higher by Christ, but not called to that repentance to which he called the vicious Gentiles, and the adulterous persons among the Jews, and the hypocritical Pharisees. There are some so innocent that they "need no repentance," saith the Scripture; meaning, that though they do need contrition for their single acts of sin, yet they are within the state of grace, and need not repentance as it is a conversion of the whole man. And so it is in baptism, which does all its effects upon them that need them all, and some upon them that need but some: and therefore, as it pardons sins to them that have committed them, and do repent and believe; so to the others, who have not committed them, it does all the work which is done to the others above or besides that pardon.

2. Secondly: When the ordinary effect of a sacrament is done already by some other efficiency or instrument, yet the sacrament is still as obligatory as before, not for so many reasons or necessities, but for the same commandment. Baptism is the first ordinary current in which the Spirit moves and descends upon us; and where God's Spirit is, they are the sons of God, for Christ's Spirit descends upon none but them that are his: and yet Cornelius[a], who had received the Holy Spirit, and was heard by God, and visited by an angel, and accepted in his alms, and fastings, and prayers, was tied to the susception of baptism. To which may be added, that the receiving the effects of baptism beforehand was used as an argument the rather to administer baptism. The effect of which consideration is this, that baptism and its effect may be separated, and do not always go in conjunction; the effect may be before, and therefore much rather may it be after its susception; the sacrament operating in the virtue of Christ, even "as the Spirit shall move:" according to that saying of St. Austin[b], "Sacrosancto lavacro inchoata innovatio novi hominis perficiendo perficitur in aliis citiùs, in aliis tardiùs;" and St. Bernard[c], "Lavari quidem citò possumus, sed ad

[a] Acts, x. 47. [b] Aug. de Moribus Eccles. Cath. lib. i. c. 35.
[c] Bern. Serm. de Cœna Dom.

sanandum multâ curatione opus est." "The work of regeneration, that is begun in the ministry of baptism, is perfected in some sooner; in some, later.—We may soon be washed; but to be healed is a work of a long cure."

3. Thirdly: The dispositions, which are required to the ordinary susception of baptism, are not necessary to the efficacy, or required to the nature, of the sacrament, but accidentally, and because of the superinduced necessities of some men; and therefore the conditions are not regularly to be required. But, in those accidents, it was necessary for a Gentile proselyte to repent of his sins, and to believe in Moses's law, before he could be circumcised: but Abraham was not tied to the same conditions, but only to faith in God; but Isaac was not tied to so much; and circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers: and yet, after the sanction of Moses's law, men were tied to conditions, which were then made necessary to them, that entered into the covenant, but not necessary to the nature of the covenant itself. And so it is in the susception of baptism: if a sinner enters into the font, it is necessary he be stripped of those appendages, which himself sewed upon his nature, and then repentance is a necessary disposition: if his understanding hath been a stranger to religion, polluted with evil principles and a false religion, it is necessary he have an actual faith, that he be given in his understanding up to the obedience of Christ. And the reason of this is plain; because, in these persons, there is a disposition contrary to the state and effects of baptism; and therefore they must be taken off by their contraries, faith and repentance, that they may be reduced to the state of pure receptives. And this is the sense of those words of our blessed Saviour, "Unless ye become like one of these little ones, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be admitted into the gospel covenant, unless all your contrarieties and impediments be taken from you, and you be as apt as children to receive the new immissions from heaven. And this proposition relies upon a great example, and a certain reason. The example is our blessed Saviour, who was "nullius pœnitentiæ debitor;" he had committed no sin, and needed no repentance; he needed not to be saved by faith, for of faith he was "the author and finisher," and the great object, and its perfection and reward: and yet

he was baptized by the baptism of John, the baptism of repentance. And therefore it is certain, that repentance and faith are not necessary to the susception of baptism, but necessary to some persons, that are baptized. For it is necessary we should much consider the difference. If the sacrament by any person may be justly received, in whom such dispositions are not to be found, then the dispositions are not necessary or intrinsical to the susception of the sacrament; and yet some persons coming to this sacrament may have such necessities of their own, as will make the sacrament ineffectual without such dispositions. These I call necessary to the person, but not to the sacrament; that is, necessary to all such, but not necessary to all absolutely. And faith is necessary sometimes, where repentance is not; sometimes repentance and faith together, and sometimes otherwise. When Philip[d] baptized the eunuch, he only required of him to believe, not to repent. But St. Peter[e], when he preached to the Jews, and converted them, only required repentance; which, although it, in their case, implied faith, yet there was explicit stipulation for it: they had "crucified the Lord of life[f];" and if they would come to God by baptism, they must renounce their sin; that was all was then stood upon. It is as the case is, or as the persons have superinduced necessities upon themselves. In children the case is evident as to the one part, which is equally required; I mean repentance: the not doing of which cannot prejudice them as to the susception of baptism, because they, having done no evil, are not bound to repent; and to repent is as necessary to the susception of baptism as faith is. But this shows, that they are accidentally necessary; that is, not absolutely, not to all, not to infants: and if they may be excused from one duty, which is indispensably necessary to baptism, why they may not from the other, is a secret, which will not be found out by these, whom it concerns to believe it.

4. And therefore, when our blessed Lord made a stipulation and express commandment for faith, with the greatest annexed penalty to them that had it not, "he that believeth not, shall be damned," the proposition is not to be verified or understood as relative to every period of time; for then no

[d] Acts, viii. 37. [e] Acts, ii. 38. [f] Acts, iii. 15.

man could be converted from infidelity to the Christian faith, and from the power of the devil to the kingdom of Christ, but his present infidelity shall be his final ruin. It is not therefore γνώμη, but χρεία, not a sentence, but a use, a prediction and intermination. It is not like that saying, "God is true, and every man a liar," and, "Every good and every perfect gift is from above;" for these are true in every instant, without reference to circumstances: but, "he that believeth not, shall be damned," is a prediction, or that which in rhetoric is called χρεία, or a use, because this is the affirmation of that, which usually or frequently comes to pass; such as this: "He that strikes with the sword, shall perish by the sword; he that robs a church, shall be like a wheel," of a vertiginous and unstable estate; "he that loves wine and oil, shall not be rich:" and therefore it is a declaration of that, which is universally or commonly true; but not so, that in what instant soever a man is not a believer, in that instant it is true to say he is damned; for some are called the third, some the sixth, some the ninth hour; and they that come in, being first called, at the eleventh hour, shall have their reward: so that this sentence stands true at the day and the judgment of the Lord, not at the judgment or day of man. And in the same necessity as faith stands to salvation, in the same it stands to baptism; that is, to be measured by the whole latitude of its extent. Our baptism shall no more do all its intention, unless faith supervene, than a man is in possibility of being saved without faith; it must come in its due time, but is not indispensably necessary in all instances and periods. Baptism is the seal of our election and adoption; and as election is brought to effect by faith and its consequents, so is baptism: but to neither is faith necessary as to its beginning and first entrance. To which also I add this consideration, that actual faith is necessary, not to the susception, but to the consequent effects of baptism, appears, because the church, and particularly the apostles, did baptize some persons who had not faith, but were hypocrites; such as were Simon Magus, Alexander the coppersmith, Demas, and Diotrephes; and such was Judas when he was baptized, and such were the Gnostic teachers. For the effect depends upon God, who knows the heart, but the outward susception depends upon them, who do not know it: which is a certain

argument, that the same faith, which is necessary to the effect of the sacrament, is not necessary to its susception; and if it can be administered to hypocrites, much more to infants; if to those who really hinder the effect, much rather to them that hinder not. And if it be objected, that the church does not know but the pretenders have faith, but she knows infants have not; I reply, that the church does not know but the pretenders hinder the effect, and are contrary to the grace of the sacrament, but she knows that infants do not: the first possibly may receive the grace, the other cannot hinder it.

5. But besides these things, it is considerable, that, when it is required, persons have faith. It is true, they that require baptism, should give a reason why they do; so it was in the case of the eunuch baptized by Philip: but this is not to be required of others that do not ask it, and yet they may be of the church, and of the faith; for by faith is also understood the Christian religion, and the Christian faith is the Christian religion, and of this a man may be, though he make no confession of his faith, as a man may be of the church, and yet not be of the number of God's secret ones; and to this, more is required than to that: to the first, it is sufficient that he be admitted by a sacrament or a ceremony; which is infallibly certain, because hypocrites and wicked people are in the visible communion of the church, and are reckoned as members of it, and yet to them there was nothing done but the ceremony administered; and therefore, when that is done to infants, they also are to be reckoned in the church communion. And indeed, in the examples of Scripture, we find more inserted into the number of God's family by outward ceremony than by the inward grace. Of this number were all those, who were circumcised the eighth day, who were admitted thither, as the woman's daughter was cured in the Gospel, by the faith of their mother, their natural parents, or their spiritual; to whose faith it is as certain God will take heed, as to their faith who brought one to Christ, who could not come himself, the poor paralytic; for when Christ saw their faith, he cured their friend: and yet it is to be observed, that Christ did use to exact faith, actual faith, of them that came to him to be cured; "According to your faith be it unto you[s]." The case

[s] Matt. ix. 29.

is equal in its whole kind. And it is considerable what Christ saith to the poor man, that came in behalf of his son, "All things are possible to him that believeth[h]:" it is possible for a son to receive the blessing and benefit of his father's faith; and it was so in his case, and is possible to any; for "to faith all things are possible." And as to the event of things, it is evident in the story of the Gospel, that the faith of their relatives was equally effective to children and friends or servants, absent or sick, as the faith of the interested person was to himself: as appears, beyond all exception, in the case of the friends of the paralytic, let down with cords through the tiles; of the centurion[i], in behalf of his servant; of the nobleman, for his son sick at Capernaum[k]; of the Syrophœnician, for her daughter: and Christ required faith of no sick man, but of him that presented himself to him[l], and desired for himself that he might be cured, as it was in the case of the blind man. Though they could not believe, yet Christ required belief of them, that came to him on their behalf. And why then it may not be so, or is not so, in the case of infants' baptism, I confess it is past my skill to conjecture. The reason on which this farther relies, is contained in the next proposition.

6. Fourthly: No disposition, or act of man, can deserve the first grace, or the grace of pardon: for so long as a man is unpardoned, he is an enemy to God, and as a dead person; and, unless he be prevented by the grace of God, cannot do a single act in order to his pardon and restitution; so that the first work which God does upon a man, is so wholly his own, that the man hath nothing in it, but to entertain it; that is, not to hinder the work of God upon him. And this is done in them that have in them nothing that can hinder the work of grace, or in them who remove the hinderances. Of the latter sort are all sinners, who have lived in a state contrary to God; of the first are they, who are prevented by the grace of God before they can choose; that is, little children, and those that become like unto little children. So that faith and repentance are not necessary at first to the reception of the first grace, but by accident. If sin have drawn curtains, and put bars and coverings to the windows, these must be

[h] Mark, ix. 23. [i] Matt. viii. 13. [k] John, iv. 50. [l] Matt. ix. 28.

taken away; and that is done by faith and repentance: but if the windows be not shut, so that the light can pass through them, the eye of Heaven will pass in and dwell there. "No man can come unto me, unless my Father draw him[m];" that is, the first access to Christ is nothing of our own, but wholly of God; and it is as in our creation, in which we have an obediential capacity, but co-operate not; only if we be contrary to the work of grace, that contrariety must be taken off, else there is no necessity. And if all men, according to Christ's saying, must "receive the kingdom of God as little children[n]," it is certain, little children do receive it; they receive it as all men ought; that is, without any impediment or obstruction, without any thing within that is contrary to that state.

7. Fifthly: Baptism is not to be estimated as one act, transient and effective to single purposes; but it is an entrance to a conjugation and a state of blessings. All our life is to be transacted by the measures of the Gospel covenant, and that covenant is consigned by baptism; there we have our title and adoption to it: and the grace that is then given to us, is like a piece of leaven put into a lump of dough, and faith and repentance do, in all the periods of our life, put it into fermentation and activity. Then the seed of God is put into the ground of our hearts, and repentance waters it, and faith makes it subactum solum, the ground and furrows apt to produce fruits: and therefore faith and repentance are necessary to the effect of baptism, not to its susception; that is, necessary to all those parts of life, in which baptism does operate, not to the first sanction or entering into the covenant. The seed may lie long in the ground, and produce fruits in its due season, if it be refreshed with "the former and the latter rain;" that is, the repentance that first changes the state, and converts the man, and afterwards returns him to his title, and recalls him from his wanderings, and keeps him in the state of grace, and within the limits of the covenant: and all the way faith gives efficacy and acceptation to this repentance; that is, continues our title to the promise of not having righteousness exacted by the measures of the law, but by the

[m] John, vi. 44. [n] Mark, x. 15.

covenant and promise of grace, into which we entered in baptism, and walk in the same all the days of our life.

8. Sixthly: The Holy Spirit, which descends upon the waters of baptism, does not instantly produce its effects in the soul of the baptized; and when he does, it is irregularly, and as he pleases. "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth:" and the catechumen is admitted into the kingdom, yet "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation[o]:" and this saying of our blessed Saviour was spoken of "the kingdom of God that is within us[p];" that is, the spirit of grace, the power of the Gospel put into our hearts, concerning which he affirmed, that it operates so secretly, that it comes not with outward show; "neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there." Which thing I desire the rather to be observed, because, in the same discourse, which our blessed Saviour continued to that assembly, he affirms this "kingdom of God" to belong unto "little children[q]," this kingdom, that "cometh not with outward significations," or present expresses, this kingdom that is within us. For the present, the use I make of it is this: that no man can conclude that this kingdom of power, that is, the spirit of sanctification, is not come upon infants, because there is no sign or expression of it. It is "within us," therefore it hath no signification. It is "the seed of God;" and it is no good argument to say, here is no seed in the bowels of the earth, because there is nothing green upon the face of it. For the church gives the sacrament, God gives the grace of the sacrament. But because he does not always give it at the instant, in which the church gives the sacrament, (as if there be a secret impediment in the suscipient,) and yet afterwards does give it, when the impediment is removed, (as to them that repent of that impediment,) it follows, that the church may administer rightly, even before God gives the real grace of the sacrament: and if God gives this grace afterwards by parts, and yet all of it is the effect of that covenant, which was consigned in baptism; he that defers some, may defer all, and verify every part, as well as any part. For it is certain, that,

[o] Luke, xvii. 20. [p] Verse 21. [q] Luke, xviii. 16.

in the instance now made, all the grace is deferred; in infants, it is not certain but that some is collated or infused: however, be it so or no, yet upon this account the administration of the sacrament is not hindered.

9. Seventhly: When the Scripture speaks of the effects of, or dispositions to, baptism, it speaks in general expressions, as being most apt to signify a common duty, or a general effect, or a more universal event, or the proper order of things: but those general expressions do not "supponere universaliter;" that is, are not to be understood exclusively to all, that are not so qualified, or universally of all suscipients, or of all the subjects of the proposition. When the prophets complain of the Jews, that they are fallen from God, and turned to idols, and walk not in the way of their fathers; and at other times the Scripture speaks the same thing of their fathers, that they walked perversely toward God, "starting aside like a broken bow;" in these, and the like expressions, the holy Scripture uses a synecdoche, or signifies many only, under the notion of a more large and indefinite expression: for neither were all the fathers good, neither did all the sons prevaricate; but among the fathers there were enough to recommend to posterity by way of example, and among the children there were enough to stain the reputation of the age; but neither the one part nor the other was true of every single person. St. John the Baptist spake to the whole audience, saying, "O generation of vipers!" and yet he did not mean that all Jerusalem and Judea, that "went out to be baptized of him," were such; but he, under an undeterminate reproof, intended those that were such, that is, especially the priests and the pharisees. And it is more considerable yet in the story of the event of Christ's sermon in the synagogue, upon his text taken out of Isaiah, "all wondered at his gracious words, and bare him witness[r];" and a little after, "all they in the synagogue were filled with wrath:" that is, it was generally so, but hardly to be supposed true of every single person, in both the contrary humours and usages. Thus Christ said to the apostles, "Ye have abode with me in my temptations;" and yet Judas was all the way a follower of interest and the bag, rather than Christ, and afterwards none

[r] Luke, iv. 22, 28.

of them all did abide with Christ in his greatest temptations. Thus also, to come nearer the present question, the secret effects of election, and of the Spirit, are in Scripture attributed to all that are of the outward communion. So St. Peter calls all the Christian strangers of the eastern dispersion, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father[s];" and St. Paul saith of all the Roman Christians, and the same of the Thessalonians, that their "faith was spoken of in all the world:" and yet amongst them it is not to be supposed, that all the professors had an unreprovable faith, or that every one of the church of Thessalonica was an excellent and a charitable person; and yet the apostle useth this expression, "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth[t]." These are usually significant of a general custom or order of things, or duty of men, or design, and natural or proper expectation of events. Such are these also in this very question, "As many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;" that is, so it is regularly, and so it will be in its due time, and that is the order of things, and the designed event: but from hence we cannot conclude of every person, and in every period of time, "This man hath been baptized," therefore "now he is clothed with Christ, he hath put on Christ;" nor thus, "This person cannot, in a spiritual sense, as yet put on Christ," therefore "he hath not been baptized," that is, "he hath not put him on in a sacramental sense." Such is the saying of St. Paul, "Whom he hath predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified[u]:" this also declares the regular event, or at least the order of things, and the design of God, but not the actual verification of it to all persons. These sayings concerning baptism in the like manner are to be so understood, that they cannot exclude all persons from the sacrament, that have not all those real effects of the sacrament at all times, which some men have at some times, and all men must have at some time or other, viz. when the sacrament obtains its last intention. But he that shall argue from hence, that children are not rightly baptized, because they cannot in a spiritual sense put

[s] 1 Pet. i. 2. [t] 2 Thess. i. 3. [u] Rom. viii. 30.

on Christ, concludes nothing, unless these propositions did signify universally, and at all times, and in every person, and in every manner: which can no more pretend to truth, than that all Christians are God's elect, and all that are baptized are saints, and all that are called are justified, and all that are once justified, shall be saved finally. These things declare only the event of things, and their order, and the usual effect, and the proper design, in their proper season, in their limited proportions.

10. Eighthly: A negative argument for matters of fact in Scripture cannot conclude a law, or a necessary or a regular event. And therefore, supposing that it be not intimated, that the apostles did baptize infants, it follows not that they did not; and if they did not, it does not follow that they might not, or that the church may not. For it is unreasonable to argue, the Scripture speaks nothing of the baptism of the holy Virgin-mother, therefore she was not baptized. The words and deeds of Christ are infinite, which are not recorded, and of the acts of the apostles we may suppose the same in their proportion: and therefore what they did not, is no rule to us, unless they did it not, because they were forbidden. So that it can be no good argument to say, the apostles are not read to have baptized infants, therefore infants are not to be baptized: but thus, we do not find that infants are excluded from the common sacraments and ceremonies of Christian institution, therefore we may not presume to exclude them. For although the negative of a fact is no good argument, yet the negative of a law is a very good one. We may not say, the apostles did not, therefore we may not: but thus, they were not forbidden to do it, there is no law against it, therefore it may be done. No man's deeds can prejudicate a Divine law expressed in general terms, much less can it be prejudiced by those things that were not done. "That which is wanting cannot be numbered[x]," cannot be effectual; therefore, "Baptize all nations," must signify all that it can signify, all that are reckoned in the capitations and accounts of a nation. Now, since all contradiction to this question depends wholly upon these two grounds, the negative argument in matter of fact, and the

[x] Eccles. i. 15.

pretences that faith and repentance are required to baptism; since the first is wholly nothing, and infirm upon an infinite account, and the second may conclude, that infants can no more be saved than be baptized, because faith is more necessary to salvation than to baptism; it being said, "He that believeth not, shall be damned," and it is not said, "He that believeth not, shall be excluded from baptism:" it follows, that the doctrine of those that refuse to baptize their infants, is, upon both its legs, weak, and broken, and insufficient.

11. Upon the supposition of these grounds, the baptism of infants, according to the perpetual practice of the church of God, will stand firm and unshaken upon its own base. For, as the eunuch said to Philip, "What hinders them to be baptized?" If they can receive benefit by it, it is infallibly certain, that it belongs to them also to receive it, and to their parents to procure it; for nothing can deprive us of so great a grace but an unworthiness, or a disability. They are not disabled to receive it, if they need it, and if it does them good; and they have neither done good nor evil, and, therefore, they have not forfeited their right to it. This, therefore, shall be the first great argument or combination of inducements, Infants receive many benefits by the susception of baptism, and therefore, in charity and in duty, we are to bring them to baptism.

12. First: The first effect of baptism is, that in it we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ, offered and presented unto him. In which certainly there is the same act of worship to God, and the same blessing to the children of Christians, as there was in presenting the first-born among the Jews. For our children can be God's own portion as well as theirs: and as they presented the first-born to God, and so acknowledged that God might have taken his life in sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of the Lamb, or the oblation of a beast; yet, when the right was confessed, God gave him back again, and took a lamb in exchange, or a pair of doves: so are our children presented to God as forfeit, and God might take the forfeiture, and not admit the babe to the promises of grace; but when the presentation of the child and our acknowledgment is made to God, God takes the Lamb of the world in exchange, and he hath paid our forfeiture, and the children are "holy unto the Lord." And

what hinders here? Cannot a cripple receive an alms at the beautiful gate of the temple, unless he go thither himself? or cannot a gift be presented to God by the hands of the owners, and the gift become holy and pleasing to God, without its own consent? The parents have a portion of the possession: children are blessings, and God's gifts, and the father's greatest wealth, and, therefore, are to be given again to him. In other things we give something to God of all that he gives us; all we do not, because our needs force us to retain the greater part, and the less sanctifies the whole: but our children must all be returned to God; for we may love them, and so may God too, and they are the better our own by being made holy in their presentation. Whatsoever is given to God is holy, every thing in its proportion and capacity; a lamb is holy, when it becomes a sacrifice; and a table is holy, when it becomes an altar; and a house is holy, when it becomes a church; and a man is holy, when he is consecrated to be a priest; and so is every one, that is dedicated to religion: these are holy persons, the others are holy things. And infants are between both: they have the sanctification that belongs to them, the holiness that can be of a reasonable nature offered and destined to God's service; but not in that degree that is in an understanding, choosing person. Certain it is, that infants may be given to God; and if they may be, they must be: for it is not here as in goods, where we are permitted to use all, or some, and give what portion we please out of them; but we cannot do our duty towards our children, unless we give them wholly to God, and offer them to his service and to his grace. The first does honour to God; the second does charity to the children. The effects and real advantages will appear in the sequel. In the mean time, this argument extends thus far, that children may be presented to God acceptably, in order to his service. And it was highly preceptive, when our blessed Saviour commanded, that we should "suffer little children to come to" him: and when they came, they carried away a blessing along with them. He was desirous they should partake of his merits: he is not willing, neither is it his Father's will, "that any of these little ones should perish." And, therefore, he died for them, and loved, and blessed them: and so he will now, if they be

brought to him, and presented as candidates of the religion, and of the resurrection. Christ hath a blessing for our children; but let them come to him, that is, be presented at the doors of the church to the sacrament of adoption and initiation; for I know no other way for them to come.

13. Secondly: Children may be adopted into the covenant of the gospel, that is, "made partakers of the communion of saints," which is the second effect of baptism; parts of the church, members of Christ's mystical body, and put into the order of eternal life. Now concerning this, it is certain the church clearly hath power to do her offices in order to it. The faithful can pray for all men, they can do their piety to some persons with more regard, and greater earnestness; they can admit whom they please, in their proper dispositions, to a participation of all their holy prayers, and communions, and preachings, and exhortations: and if all this be a blessing, and all this be the actions of our own charity, who can hinder the church of God from admitting infants to the communion of all their pious offices, which can do them benefit in their present capacity? How this does necessarily infer baptism, I shall afterwards discourse[7]. But, for the present, I enumerate, that the blessings of baptism are communicable to them; they may be admitted into a fellowship of all the prayers and privileges of the church, and the communion of saints, in blessings, and prayers, and holy offices. But that which is of greatest persuasion, and convincing efficacy, in this particular, is, that the children of the church are as capable of the same covenant as the children of the Jews: but it was the same covenant that circumcision did consign, a spiritual covenant under a veil, and now it is the same spiritual covenant without the veil; which is evident to him that considers it, thus:

14. The words of the covenant are these: "I am the almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect: I will multiply thee exceedingly: thou shalt be a father of many nations: thy name shall not be Abram, but Abraham: nations and kings shall be out of thee: I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee: and, I will give all the land of Canaan to thy seed: and, all the males shall be

[7] Sect. xxv. &c.

circumcised; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and thee: and, he that is not circumcised shall be cut off from his people[z]." The covenant which was on Abraham's part was, "To walk before God, and to be perfect;" on God's part, to bless him with a numerous issue, and them with the land of Canaan: and the sign was circumcision, the token of the covenant. Now, in all this there was no duty to which the posterity was obliged, nor any blessing which Abraham could perceive or feel, because neither he nor his posterity did enjoy the promise for many hundred years after the covenant: and therefore, as there was a duty for the posterity, which is not here expressed; so there was a blessing for Abraham, which was concealed under the leaves of a temporal promise, and which we shall better understand from them, whom the Spirit of God hath taught the mysteriousness of this transaction. The argument, indeed, and the observation, is wholly St. Paul's[a]. Abraham and the patriarchs "died in faith, not having received the promises," viz. of a possession in Canaan. "They saw the promises afar off," they embraced them, and looked through the cloud, and the temporal veil: this was not it: they might have returned to Canaan, if that had been the object of their desires, and the design of the promise: but they desired and did seek a country, but it was a better, and that a heavenly. This was the object of their desire, and the end of their search, and the reward of their faith, and the secret of their promise. And therefore circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had before his circumcision[b]," before the making this covenant; and therefore it must principally relate to an effect and a blessing greater than was afterwards expressed in the temporal promise: which effect was "forgiveness of sins, a not imputing to us our infirmities, justification by faith, accounting that for righteousness:" and these effects or graces were promised to Abraham, not only for his posterity after the flesh, but his children after the Spirit, even to all that shall believe, and "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he walked in, being yet uncircumcised."

[z] Gen. xvii. 1, &c.
[a] Heb. xi. 13, 14, 15, 16.
[b] Rom. iv. 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12.

15. This was no other but the covenant of the gospel, though afterwards otherwise consigned: for so the apostle expressly affirms, that Abraham was the father of circumcision, (viz. by virtue of this covenant,) "not only to them that are circumcised, but to all that believe[c]: for this promise was not through the law" of works, or of circumcision, "but of faith." And therefore, as St. Paul observes, God promised that Abraham should be a father, not of that nation only, but "of many nations, and the heir of the world; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ[d]," that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. "And if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since then the covenant of the gospel is the covenant of faith, and not of works; and the promises are spiritual, not secular; and Abraham, the father of the faithful Gentiles as well as the circumcised Jews; and the heir of the world, not by himself, but by his seed, or the Son of Man, our Lord Jesus: it follows, that the promises which circumcision did seal, were the same promises which are consigned in baptism; the covenant is the same, only that God's people are not impaled in Palestine, and the veil is taken away, and the temporal is passed into spiritual; and the result will be this, "That to as many persons, and in as many capacities, and in the same dispositions as the promises were applied and did relate in circumcision, to the same they do belong and may be applied in baptism[e]." And let it be remembered, that the covenant which circumcision did sign, was a covenant of grace and faith; the promises were of the Spirit, or spiritual; it was made before the law, and could not be rescinded by the legal covenant; nothing could be added to it, or taken from it; and we that are partakers of this grace, are therefore partakers of it by being Christ's servants, united to Christ, and so are become Abraham's seed, as the apostle at large and professedly proves in divers places, but especially in the fourth to the Romans, and the

[c] Rom. iv. 11, 13, 17. [d] Gal. iii. 14, 29.

[e] Οἱ τύπῳ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὄντες, ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ· καὶ γὰρ ἡ περιτομὴ σαρκικὴ ὑπερτέθεισα χρόνῳ, ἕως τῆς μεγάλης περιτομῆς, τουτέστι τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῦ περιτέμνοντος ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ σφραγίσαντος ἡμᾶς εἰς ὄνομα Θεοῦ.—*Epiphan.* lib. i. *Hæres.* 8. *scil. Epicureor.*

third to the Galatians. And, therefore, if infants were then admitted to it, and consigned to it by a sacrament, which they understood not any more than ours do, there is not any reason why ours should not enter in at the ordinary gate and door of grace as well as they. Their children were circumcised the eighth day, but were instructed afterwards, when they could inquire what these things meant. Indeed their proselytes were first taught, then circumcised; so are ours baptized: but their infants were consigned first; and so must ours.

16. Thirdly: In baptism we are born again; and this infants need in the present circumstances, and for the same great reason that men of age and reason do. For our natural birth is either of itself insufficient, or is made so by the fall of Adam, and the consequent evils, that nature alone, or our first birth, cannot bring us to heaven, which is a supernatural end, that is, an end above all the power of our nature as now it is. So that if nature cannot bring us to heaven, grace must, or we can never get thither; if the first birth cannot, a second must: but the second birth spoken of in Scripture is baptism; "a man must be born of water and the Spirit." And therefore baptism is λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, "the laver of a new birth[f]." Either then infants cannot go to heaven any way that we know of, or they must be baptized. To say they are to be left to God, is an excuse, and no answer: for when God hath opened the door, and calls that the "entrance into heaven," we do not leave them to God, when we will not carry them to him in the way which he hath described, and at the door which himself hath opened: we leave them indeed, but it is but helpless and destitute: and though God is better than man, yet that is no warrant to us; what it will be to the children, that we cannot warrant or conjecture. And if it be objected, that to the new birth are required dispositions of our own, which are to be wrought by and in them, that have the use of reason: besides that this is wholly against the analogy of a new birth, in which the person to be born is wholly a passive, and hath put into him the principle, that in time will produce its proper actions; it is certain that they, that can receive the new birth, are capable of it. The

[f] Tit. iii. 5.

effect of it is a possibility of being saved, and arriving to a supernatural felicity. If infants can receive this effect, then also the new birth, without which they cannot receive the effect. And if they can receive salvation, the effect of the new birth, what hinders them but they may receive that, that is in order to that effect, and ordained only for it, and which is nothing of itself, but in its institution and relation, and which may be received by the same capacity, in which one may be created, that is, a passivity, or a capacity obediential?

17. Fourthly: Concerning pardon of sins, which is one great effect of baptism, it is certain that infants have not that benefit, which men of sin and age may receive. He that hath a sickly stomach, drinks wine, and it not only refreshes his spirits, but cures his stomach: he that drinks wine, and hath not that disease, receives good by his wine, though it does not minister to so many needs; it refreshes, though it does not cure him: and when oil is poured upon a man's head, it does not always heal a wound, but sometimes makes him a cheerful countenance, sometimes it consigns him to be a king, or a priest. So it is in baptism: it does not heal the wounds of actual sins, because they have not committed them; but it takes off the evil of original sin: whatsoever is imputed to us by Adam's prevarication, is washed off by the death of the second Adam[g], into which we are baptized. But concerning original sin, because there are so many disputes which may intricate the question, I shall make use only of that, which is confessed on both sides, and material to our purpose. Death came upon all men by Adam's sin, and the necessity of it remains upon us, as an evil consequent of the disobedience. For though death is natural, yet it was kept off from man by God's favour; which, when he lost, the banks were broken, and the water reverted to its natural course, and our nature became a curse, and death a punishment. Now, that this also relates to infants so far, is certain, because they are sick, and die. This the Pelagians denied not[h]. But to whomsoever this evil descended, for them

[g] Rom. v. 17, 18.

[h] Vide Aug. lib. iv. contra Duas Epistolas Pelag. c. 4. l. 6. contra Jur. cap. 4.

also a remedy is provided by the second Adam; "That as, in Adam, all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive;" that is, at the day of judgment: then death shall be destroyed. In the mean time, death hath a sting and a bitterness, a curse it is, and an express of the Divine anger: and if this sting be not taken away here, we shall have no participation of the final victory over death. Either, therefore, infants must be for ever without remedy in this evil consequent of their father's sin, or they must be adopted into the participation of Christ's death, which is the remedy. Now, how can they partake of Christ's death, but by baptism into his death? For if there be any spiritual way fancied, it will, by a stronger argument, admit them to baptism: for if they can receive spiritual effects, they can also receive the outward sacrament; this being denied only upon pretence they cannot have the other. If there be no spiritual way extraordinary, then the ordinary way is only left for them. If there be an extraordinary, let it be shown, and Christians will be at rest concerning their children. One thing only I desire to be observed, that Pelagius denied original sin, but yet denied not the necessity of infants' baptism; and being accused of it, in an espistle to Pope Innocent the First, he purged himself of the suspicion, and allowed the practice, but denied the inducement of it: which shows, that their arts are weak, that think baptism to be useless to infants, if they be not formally guilty of the prevarication of Adam. By which I also gather, that it was so universal, so primitive a practice, to baptize infants, that it was greater than all pretences to the contrary: for it would much have conduced to the introducing his opinion against grace and original sin, if he had destroyed that practice, which seemed so very much to have its greatest necessity from the doctrine he denied. But against Pelagius, and against all that follow the parts of his opinion, it is of good use which St. Austin, Prosper[1], and Fulgentius argue; if infants are punished for Adam's sin, then they are also guilty of it in some sense. "Nimis enim impium est hoc de Dei sentire justitiâ, quòd à prævaricatione liberos cum reis voluerit esse damnatos:" So Prosper. "Dispendia quæ flentes nascendo testantur, dicito

[1] Prosper contra Collatorem, c. 20.

quo merito sub justissimo et omnipotentissimo judice eis, si nullum peccatum attrahant, arrogentur," said St. Austin. For the guilt of it signifies nothing but the obligation to the punishment; and he that feels the evil consequent, to him the sin is imputed; not as to all the same dishonour, or moral accounts, but to the more material, to the natural account: and, in holy Scripture, the taking off the punishment is the pardon of the sin; and in the same degree the punishment is abolished, in the same God is appeased, and then the person stands upright, being reconciled to God by his grace. Since, therefore, infants have the punishment of sin, it is certain the sin is imputed to them; and, therefore, they need being reconciled to God by Christ: and if so, then, when they are baptized into Christ's death, and into his resurrection, their sins are pardoned, because the punishment is taken off, the sting of natural death is taken away, because God's anger is removed, and they shall partake of Christ's resurrection; which because baptism does signify and consign, they also are to be baptized. To which also add this appendant consideration, that whatsoever the sacraments do consign, that also they do convey and minister: they do it, that is, God by them does it, lest we should think the sacraments to be mere illusions, and abusing us by deceitful ineffective signs: and, therefore, to infants the grace of a title to a resurrection and reconciliation to God, by the death of Christ, is conveyed, because it signifies and consigns this to them more to the life and analogy of resemblance, than circumcision to the infant sons of Israel. I end this consideration with the words of Nazianzen: Ἡ γέννησις ἐκ βαπτίσματος πᾶν ἀπὸ γενέσεως κάλυμμα περιτέμνει, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἄνω ζωὴν ἐπανάγει· "Our birth, by baptism, does cut off every unclean appendage of our natural birth, and leads us to a celestial life[k]." And this, in children, is therefore more necessary, because the evil came upon them without their own act of reason and choice, and, therefore, the grace and remedy ought not to stay the leisure of dull nature, and the formalities of the civil law.

18. Fifthly: The baptism of infants does to them the greatest part of that benefit, which belongs to the remission

[k] Orat. 40. de Baptis.

of sins: for baptism is a state of repentance and pardon for ever. This I suppose to be already proved; to which I only add this caution, that the Pelagians, to undervalue the necessity of supervening grace, affirmed, that baptism did minister to us grace sufficient to live perfectly, and without sin for ever. Against this St. Jerome sharply declaims, and affirms, "Baptismum præterita donare peccata, non futuram servare justitiam[l];" that is, "non statim justum facit et omni plenum justitiâ," as he expounds his meaning in another place[m]. "Vetera peccata conscindit, novas virtutes non tribuit; dimittit à carcere, et dimisso, si laboraverit, præmia pollicetur." Baptism does not so forgive future sins, that we may do what we please, or so as we need not labour, and watch, and fear, perpetually, and make use of God's grace to actuate our endeavours; but puts us into a state of pardon, that is, in a covenant of grace, in which so long as we labour and repent, and strive to do our duty, so long our infirmities are pitied, and our sins certain to be pardoned, upon their certain conditions; that is, by virtue of it we are capable of pardon, and must work for it, and may hope it. And therefore infants have a most certain capacity and proper disposition to baptism: for sin creeps before it can go; and little indecencies are soon learned, and malice is before their years, and they can do mischief and irregularities betimes; and though we know not when, nor how far, they are imputed in every month of their lives, yet it is an admirable art of the Spirit of grace, to put them into a state of pardon, that their remedy may at least be as soon as their necessity: and therefore Tertullian and Gregory Nazianzen advised the baptism of children to be at three or four years of age; meaning, that they then begin to have little inadvertencies and hasty follies, and actions so evil as did need a lavatory. But if baptism hath an influence upon sins in the succeeding portions of our life, then it is certain, that their being presently innocent does not hinder, and ought not to retard, the sacrament: and therefore Tertullian's, "Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum[n]? What need innocents hasten to the remission of sins?" is soon answered. It is true, they need not in respect of any actual sins; for so

[l] Lib. iii. adv. Pelag. [m] Lib. i. in initio. [n] Lib. de Baptis. c. 18.

they are innocent: but in respect of the evils of their nature derived from their original, and in respect of future sins in the whole state of their life, it is necessary they be put into a state of pardon before they sin; because some sin early, some sin later; and therefore, unless they be baptized so early as to prevent the first sins, they may chance die in a sin, to the pardon of which they have yet derived no title from Christ.

19. Sixthly: The next great effect of baptism which children can have, is the spirit of sanctification; and if they can be "baptized with water and the Spirit," it will be sacrilege to rob them of so holy treasures. And concerning this, although it be with them as St. Paul says of heirs, "The heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;" and children, although they receive the spirit of promise, and the spirit of grace, yet in respect of actual exercise they differ not from them, that have them not at all: yet this hinders not, but they may have them. For as the reasonable soul and all its faculties are in children, will, and understanding, passions, and powers of attraction and propulsion; yet these faculties do not operate or come abroad, till time and art, observation and experience, have drawn them forth into action: so may the spirit of grace, the principle of Christian life, be infused, and yet lie without action, till, in its own day, it is drawn forth. For in every Christian there are three parts concurring to his integral constitution, body, and soul, and spirit; and all these have their proper activities and times; but "every one in his own order, first that which is natural, then that which is spiritual." And what Aristotle said, "A man first lives the life of a plant, then of a beast, and lastly of a man," is true in this sense: and the more spiritual the principle is, the longer it is before it operates, because more things concur to spiritual actions than to natural: and these are necessary, and therefore first; the other are perfect, and therefore last. And who is he that so well understands the philosophy of this third principle of a Christian's life, the spirit, as to know how or when it is infused, and how it operates in all its periods, and what it is in its being and proper nature; and whether it be like the soul, or like the faculty, or like a habit; or how or to what purposes, God, in all varieties, does

dispense it? These are secrets, which none but bold people use to decree, and build propositions upon their own dreams. That which is certain is, That the Spirit is the principle of a new life, or a new birth: That baptism is the laver of this new birth: That it is the seed of God, and may lie long in the furrows before it springs up: That from the faculty to the act, the passage is not always sudden and quick: That the Spirit is "the earnest of our inheritance," that is, of resurrection to eternal life: which inheritance, because children we hope shall have, they cannot be denied to have its seal and earnest; that is, if they shall have all, they are not to be denied a part. That children have some effects of the Spirit, and therefore do receive it, and are "baptized with the Spirit," and therefore may with water: which thing is therefore true and evident, because some children are sanctified, as Jeremiah and the Baptist, and therefore all may. And because all sanctification of persons is an effect of the Holy Ghost, there is no peradventure but they, that can be sanctified by God, can, in that capacity, receive the Holy Ghost. And all the ground of dissenting here, is only upon a mistake; because infants do no act of holiness, they suppose them incapable of the grace of sanctification. Now sanctification of children is their adoption to the inheritance of sons, their presentation to Christ, their consignation to Christ's service and to resurrection, their being put into a possibility of being saved, their restitution to God's favour, which naturally, that is, as our nature is depraved and punished, they could not have. And, in short, the case is this. Original righteousness was in Adam after the manner of nature, but it was an act or effect of grace; and by it men were not made, but born righteous. The inferior faculties obeyed the superior, the mind was whole and right, and conformable to the Divine image, the reason and the will always concurring, the will followed reason, and reason followed the laws of God*; and so long as a man had not lost this, he was pleasing to God, and should have passed to a more perfect state. Now because this, if Adam had stood, should

* Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἐχρῆσθην ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν ἀνάντως ἐξολισθήσασαν ἡ πολυπαθεστάτη ζωὴ διαδέχεται, καὶ τοῦ φθορικοῦ θανάτου πέρας.—*Dionys. Areop. Eccles. Hier.* c. 3. par. 3.

have been born with every child, there was in infants a principle, which was the seed of holy life here, and a blessed hereafter; and yet the children should have gone in the road of nature then as well as now, and the Spirit should have operated at nature's leisure; God, being the giver of both, would have made them instrumental to and perfective of each other, but not destructive. Now what was lost by Adam[p], is restored by Christ; the same righteousness, only it is not born, but superinduced; not integral, but interrupted; but such as it is, there is no difference, but that the same or the like principle may be derived to us from Christ, as there should have been from Adam, that is, a principle of obedience, a regularity of faculties, a beauty in the soul, and a state of acceptation with God. And we see also in men of understanding and reason, "the Spirit of God dwells in them," which Tatianus describing, uses these words: ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ὥσπερ ἴναυσμα τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ [πνεύματος] κεκτημένη, "The soul is possessed with sparks, or materials, of the power of the Spirit;" and yet it is sometimes ineffective and unactive, sometimes more, sometimes less, and does no more do its work at all times, than the soul does at all times understand. Add to this, that if there be in infants naturally an evil principle, a proclivity to sin, an ignorance and pravity of mind, a disorder of affections, (as experience teacheth us there is, and the perpetual doctrine of the church, and the universal mischiefs issuing from mankind, and the sin of every man, does witness too much,) why cannot infants have a good principle in them, though it works not till its own season, as well as an evil principle? If there were not, by nature, some evil principle, it is not possible, that all the world should choose sin. In free agents it was never heard, that all individuals loved and chose the same thing, to which they were not naturally inclined. Neither do all men choose to marry, neither do all choose to abstain; and in this instance there is a natural inclination to one part. But of all the men and women in the world, there is no one that hath never sinned: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our-

[p] Ut quod perdideramus in Adam, i. e. secundùm imaginem et similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Jesu Christo reciperemus.—*Irenæus*, lib. iii. c. 30.

selves, and the truth is not in us[q]," said an apostle. If, therefore, nature hath in infants an evil principle, which operates when the child can choose, but is all the while within the soul; either infants have by grace a principle put into them, or else "sin abounds, where grace does not superabound," expressly against the doctrine of the apostle. The event of this discourse is, That if infants be capable of the Spirit of grace, there is no reason but they may and ought to be baptized, as well as men and women; unless God had expressly forbidden them, which cannot be pretended: and that infants are capable of the Spirit of grace, I think is made very credible. "Christus infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes," said Irenæus; "Christ became an infant among the infants, and does sanctify infants[r]:" and St. Cyprian affirms, "Esse apud omnes, sive infantes sive majores natu, unam divini muneris æquitatem; There is the same dispensation of the Divine grace to all alike, to infants as well as to men." And in this royal priesthood, as it is in the secular, kings may be anointed in their cradles. "Dat (Deus) sui Spiritûs occultissimam gratiam, quam etiam latenter infundit in parvulis[s]; God gives the most secret grace of his Spirit, which he also secretly infuses into infants." And if a secret infusion be rejected, because it cannot be proved at the place and at the instant, many men, that hope for heaven, will be very much to seek for a proof of their earnest, and need an earnest of the earnest. For all that have the Spirit of God, cannot in all instants prove it, or certainly know it: neither is it defined, by how many indices the Spirit's presence can be proved or signified. And they limit the Spirit too much, and understand it too little, who take accounts of his secret workings, and measure them by the material lines and methods of natural and animal effects. And yet, because whatsoever is holy, is made so by the Holy Spirit, we are certain that the children of believing, that is, of Christian parents, are holy. St. Paul affirmed it, and by it hath distinguished ours from the children of unbelievers, and our marriages from theirs. And because the children of the heathen, when they come to choice and reason, may enter

[q] 1 John, i. 8. [r] Ep. ad Fiden. lib. iii. ep. 8.
[s] S. Aug. lib. de Pec. Mer. et Remiss. c. 9.

into baptism and the covenant, if they will; our children have no privilege beyond the children of Turks or heathens, unless it be in the present capacity, that is, either by receiving the Holy Ghost immediately, and the promises, or at least having a title to the sacrament, and entering by that door. If they have the Spirit, nothing can hinder them from a title to the water; and if they have only a title to the water of the sacrament, then they shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, the benefits of the sacrament: else their privilege is none at all, but a dish of cold water, which every village nurse can provide for her new-born babe.

20. But it is in our case, as it was with the Jews' children: our children are a holy seed; for if it were not so with Christianity, how could St. Peter move the Jews to Christianity, by telling them "the promise was to them and their children?" For if our children be not capable of the Spirit of promise and holiness, and yet their children were holy, it had been a better argument to have kept them in the synagogue, than to have called them to the Christian church. Either, therefore, 1. There is some holiness in a reasonable nature, which is not from the Spirit of holiness; or else, 2. our children do receive the Holy Spirit, because they are holy; or if they be not holy, they are in worse condition under Christ than under Moses; or if none of all this be true, then our children are holy by having received the Holy Spirit of promise; and, consequently, nothing can hinder them from being baptized.

21. And, indeed, if the Christian Jews, whose children are circumcised, and made partakers of the same promises and title, and inheritance, and sacraments, which themselves had at their conversion to the faith of Christ, had seen their children now shut out from these new sacraments, it is not to be doubted, but they would have raised a storm greater than could easily have been suppressed, since about their circumcisions they had raised such tragedies and implacable disputations. And there had been great reason to look for a storm; for their children were circumcised, and if not baptized, then they were left under a burden, which their fathers were quit of; for St. Paul said, "Whosoever is circumcised, is a debtor to keep the whole law." These children, therefore, that were circumcised, stood obliged, for want of bap-

tism, to perform the law of ceremonies, to be presented into the temple, to pay their price, to be redeemed with silver and gold, to be bound by the law of pollutions and carnal ordinances; and therefore, if they had been thus left, it would be no wonder, if the Jews had complained and made a tumult: they used to do it for less matters.

22. To which let this be added: That the first book of the New Testament was not written till eight years after Christ's ascension, and St. Mark's Gospel twelve years. In the mean time, to what Scriptures did they appeal? By the analogy or proportion of what writings did they end their questions? Whence did they prove their articles? They only appealed to the Old Testament, and only added what their Lord superadded. Now either it must be said, that our blessed Lord commanded that infants should not be baptized, which is nowhere pretended; and if it were, cannot at all be proved: or, if by the proportion of Scriptures they did serve God, and preach the religion, it is plain, that by the analogy of the Old Testament, that is, of those Scriptures by which they proved Christ to be come and to have suffered, they also approved the baptism of infants, or the admitting them to the society of the faithful Jews, of which also the church did then principally consist.

23. Seventhly: That baptism, which consigns men and women to a blessed resurrection, doth also equally consign infants to it, hath nothing, that I know of, pretended against it; there being the same signature and the same grace, and in this thing all being alike passive, and we no way co-operating to the consignation and promise of grace. And infants have an equal necessity, as being liable to sickness and groaning with as sad accents, and dying sooner than men and women, and less able to complain, and more apt to be pitied, and broken with the unhappy consequents of a short life and a speedy death, " et infelicitate priscorum hominum," with the infelicity and folly of their first parents; and therefore have as great need as any: and that is capacity enough to receive a remedy for the evil, which was brought upon them by the fault of another.

24. Eighthly: And after all this, if baptism be that means, which God hath appointed to save us, it were well, if we would do our parts towards infants' final interest: which,

whether it depends upon the sacrament and its proper grace, we have nothing to rely upon but those texts of Scripture, which make baptism the ordinary way of entering into the state of salvation: save only we are to add this, that because of this law, since infants are not personally capable, but the church for them, as for all others indefinitely, we have reason to believe, that their friends' neglect shall by some way be supplied; but hope hath in it nothing beyond a probability. This we may be certain of, that naturally we cannot be heirs of salvation, for "by nature we are children of wrath;" and therefore an eternal separation from God is an infallible consequent to our evil nature: either, therefore, children must be put into the state of grace, or they shall dwell for ever, where God's face does never shine. Now there are but two ways of being put into the state of grace and salvation; the inward by the Spirit, and the outward by water; which regularly are together. If they be renewed by the Spirit, "what hinders them to be baptized, who receive the Holy Ghost as well as we?" If they are not capable of the Spirit, they are capable of water; and if of neither, where is their title to heaven[t], which is neither internal nor external, neither spiritual nor sacramental, neither secret nor manifest, neither natural nor gracious, neither original nor derivative? And well may we lament the death of poor babes, that are ἄβαπτοι, concerning whom, if we neglect what is regularly prescribed to all that enter heaven, without any difference expressed or case reserved, we have no reason to be comforted over our dead children, but may "weep as they that have no hope." We may hope when our neglect was not the hinderance, because God hath wholly taken the matter into his own hand, and then it cannot miscarry; and though we know nothing of the children, yet we know much of God's goodness: but when God hath permitted it to us, that is, offered and permitted children to our ministry, whatever happens to the innocents, we may well fear, lest God will require the souls at our hands: and we cannot be otherwise secure, but that it will be said concerning our children, which St. Ambrose used in a case like this: "Anima illa potuit salva fieri,

[t] Nisi quis renatus fuerit, &c. Utique nullum excipit, non infantem, non aliquâ prævcntum necessitate.—*Ambr. de Abrah. Patr.* lib. ii. c. 11.

si habuisset purgationem[u]: This soul might have gone to God, if it had been purified and washed." We know God is good, infinitely good; but we know it is not at all good to tempt his goodness: and he tempts him that leaves the usual way, and pretends it is not made for him, and yet hopes to be at his journey's end, or expects to meet his child in heaven, when himself shuts the door against him, which, for aught he knows, is the only one that stands open. St. Austin was severe in this question against unbaptized infants; therefore he is called "durus pater infantum;" though I know not why the original of that opinion should be attributed to him, since St. Ambrose said the same before him, as appears in his words before quoted.

25. And now that I have enumerated the blessings, which are consequent to baptism, and have also made apparent, that infants can receive these blessings, I suppose I need not use any other persuasions to bring children to baptism. If it be certain they may receive these good things by it, it is certain they are not to be hindered of them, without the greatest impiety, and sacrilege, and uncharitableness in the world. Nay, if it be only probable that they receive these blessings, or if it be but possible they may, nay, unless it be impossible they should, and so declared by revelation or demonstratively certain; it were intolerable unkindness and injustice to our pretty innocents, to let their crying be unpitied, and their natural misery eternally irremediable, and their sorrows without remedy, and their souls no more capable of relief than their bodies of physic, and their death left with the sting in, and their souls without spirits to go to God, and no angel-guardian to be assigned them in the assemblies of the faithful, and they not to be reckoned in the accounts of God and God's church. All these are sad stories.

26. There are in Scripture very many other probabilities, to persuade the baptism of infants; but because the places admit of divers interpretations, the arguments have so many diminutions, and the certainty that is in them, is too fine for easy understandings, I have chosen to build the ancient doctrines upon such principles, which are more easy and certain,

[u] Lib. ii. c. 11. de Abrah. Patriarc.

and have not been yet sullied and rifled with the contentions of an adversary. This only I shall observe, That the words of our blessed Lord, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," cannot be expounded to the exclusion of children, but the same expositions will also make baptism not necessary for men: for if they be both necessary ingredients, water and the Spirit, then let us provide water, and God will provide the Spirit; if we bring wood to the sacrifice, he will provide a lamb. And if they signify distinctly, one is ordinarily as necessary as the other; and then infants must be baptized, or not be saved. But if one be exegetical and explicative of the other, and by "water and the Spirit" is meant only the purification of the Spirit, then where is the necessity of baptism for men? It will be, as the other sacrament, at most but highly convenient, not simply necessary; and all the other places will easily be answered, if this be avoided. But, however, these words being spoken in so decretory a manner, are to be used with fear and reverence; and we must be infallibly sure, by some certain infallible arguments, that infants ought not to be baptized, or we ought to fear concerning the effect of these decretory words. I shall only add two things, by way of corollary to this discourse.

27. That the church of God, ever since her numbers were full, hath, for very many ages, consisted almost wholly of assemblies of them, who have been baptized in their infancy: and although, in the first callings of the Gentiles, the chiefest and most frequent baptisms were of converted and repenting persons and believers; yet, from the beginning also, the church hath baptized the infants of Christian parents; according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, I will lift up my hands to the Gentiles, and set up a standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders[z]." Concerning which I shall not only bring the testimonies of the matter of fact, but either a report of an apostolical tradition, or some argument from the fathers, which will make their testimony more effectual in all, that shall relate to the question.

[z] Isa. xlix. 22.

28. The author of the book of ecclesiastical hierarchy, attributed to St. Denis the Areopagite, takes notice, that certain unholy persons and enemies to the Christian religion think it a ridiculous thing, that infants, who as yet cannot understand the Divine mysteries, should be partakers of the sacraments; and that professions and abrenunciations should be made by others for them and in their names. He answers, that "Holy men, governors of churches, have so taught, having received a tradition from their fathers and elders in Christ." By which answer of his, as it appears that he himself was later than the Areopagite; so it is so early by him affirmed, that even then there was an ancient tradition for the baptism of infants, and the use of godfathers in the ministry of the sacrament. Concerning which, it having been so ancient a constitution of the church, it were well if men would rather humbly and modestly observe, than, like scorners, deride it; in which they shew their own folly, as well as immodesty. For what indecency or incongruity is it, that our parents, natural or spiritual, should stipulate for us, when it is agreeable to the practice of all the laws and transactions of the world, an effect of the communion of saints, and of Christian economy? For why may not infants be stipulated for, as well as we? All were included in the stipulation made with Adam; he made a losing bargain for himself, and we smarted for his folly: and if the faults of parents, and kings, and relatives, do bring evil upon their children, and subjects, and correlatives, it is but equal, that our children may have benefit also by our charity and piety. But concerning making an agreement for them, we find that God was confident concerning Abraham, that "he would teach his children:" and there is no doubt but parents have great power, by strict education and prudent discipline, to efform the minds of their children to virtue. Joshua did expressly undertake for his household: "I and my house will serve the Lord." And for children we may better do it, because, till they are of perfect choice, no government in the world is so great as that of parents over their children, in that which can concern the parts of this question; for they rule over their understandings, and children know nothing but what they are told, and they believe it infinitely. And it is a rare art of the Spirit, to engage parents to bring them up well,

" in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and they are persons obliged by a superinduced band; they are to give them instructions and holy principles, as they give them meat. And it is certain, that parents may better stipulate for their children, than the church can for men and women: for they may be present impostors and hypocrites, as the church story tells of some, and consequently are παραβατίσται, not really converted, and ineffectively baptized; and, the next day, they may change their resolution, and grow weary of their vow. And that is the most that children can do, when they come to age: and it is very much in the parents, whether the children shall do any such thing or no.

> ——— purus et insons
> (Ut me collaudem,) si vivo et charus amicis,
> Causa fuit Pater his ———
> Ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnes
> Circum doctores aderat. Quid multa? pudicum
> (Qui primus virtutis honos) servavit ab omni
> Non solùm facto, verùm opprobrio quoque turpi:
> ——— ob hoc nunc
> Laus illi debetur, et à me gratia major[7].

For education can introduce a habit and a second nature, against which children cannot kick, unless they do some violence to themselves and their inclinations. And although it fails too often whenever it fails, yet we pronounce prudently concerning future things, when we have a less influence into the event than in the present case, (and, therefore, are more unapt persons to stipulate,) and less reason in the thing itself, (and therefore have not so much reason to be confident.) Is not the greatest prudence of generals instanced in their foreseeing future events, and guessing at the designs of their enemies? concerning which they have less reason to be confident, than parents of their children's belief of the Christian creed. To which I add this consideration; That parents or godfathers may therefore safely and prudently promise, that their children shall be of the Christian faith; because we not only see millions of men and women, who not only believe the whole creed only upon the stock of their education, but there are none that ever do renounce the faith of their

[7] Horat. lib. i. Sat. 6.

country and breeding, unless they be violently tempted by interest or weakness, antecedent or consequent. He that sees all men almost to be Christians, because they are bid to be so, need not question the fittingness of godfathers promising in behalf of the children, for whom they answer.

29. And however the matter be for godfathers, yet the tradition of baptizing infants passed through the hands of Irenæus: "Omnem ætatem sanctificans per illam quæ ad ipsam erat similitudinem. Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis parvulus[z]," &c. "Christ did sanctify every age by his own susception of it, and similitude to it. For he came to save all men by himself; I say, all who by him are born again unto God, infants, and children, and boys, and young men, and old men. He was made an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; a little one to the little ones, &c." And Origen is express: "Ecclesia traditionem ab apostolis suscepit etiam parvulis dare baptismum; The church hath received a tradition from the apostles, to give baptism to children." And St. Cyprian, in his epistle to Fidus, gives account of this article: for being questioned by some less skilful persons, whether it were lawful to baptize children before the eighth day, he gives account of the whole question: and a whole council of sixty-six bishops, upon very good reason, decreed, that their baptism should at no hand be deferred; though whether six, or eight, or ten days, was no matter, so there be no danger or present necessity. The whole epistle is worth the reading.

30. But besides these authorities of such, who writ before the starting of the Pelagian questions, it will not be useless to bring the discourses of them and others, I mean the reason upon which the church did it both before and after.

31. Irenæus's argument was this[a]: Christ took upon him our nature, to sanctify and to save it; and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death, which is the symbol

[z] Lib. ii. c. 39. Vide etiam Constitut. Clementis. βαπτίζετε δὲ ὑμᾶς, καὶ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ θεοῦ. Lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6. Idem Hom. 14. in Lucam, et lib. 8. Hom. 8. in Levitic.

[a] Irenæus.

and effect of old age; and therefore it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should he be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their persons, and the saving of their souls by their infant Lord and elder Brother?

32. "Omnis enim anima eousque in Adam censetur, donec in Christo recenseatur; tamdiu immunda, quamdiu recenseatur[b]:" Every soul is accounted in Adam, till it be new accounted in Christ; and so long as it is accounted in Adam, so long it is unclean; and we know, "no unclean thing can enter into heaven:" and therefore our Lord hath defined it, "Unless ye be born of water and the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be holy. It was the argument of Tertullian[c]; which the rather is to be received, because he was one less favourable to the custom of the church, in his time, of baptizing infants, which custom he noted and acknowledged, and hath also, in the preceding discourse, fairly proved. And indeed, (that St. Cyprian[d] may superadd his symbol,) "God, who is no accepter of persons, will also be no accepter of ages. For if to the greatest delinquents, sinning long before against God, remission of sins be given, when afterwards they believe, and from baptism and from grace no man is forbidden; how much more ought not an infant be forbidden, who, being new born, hath sinned nothing, save only that being in the flesh, born of Adam, in his first birth he hath contracted the contagion of an old death? who therefore comes the easier to obtain remission of sins, because to him are forgiven not his own, but the sins of another man. None ought to be driven from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful, and gentle, and pious unto all; and therefore much less infants, who more deserve our aid, and more need the Divine mercy, because, in the first beginning of their birth, crying and weeping, they can do nothing but call for mercy and relief." "For this reason it was," saith Origen[e], "that they, to whom the secrets of the Divine mysteries were committed, did baptize their infants, because there was born with them the impurities of sin," which did

[b] Tertullian.
[c] Lib. de Anima, c. 39 et 42.
[d] S. Cyprian, ep. ad Fidum.
[e] Origen, lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6.

need material ablution, as a sacrament of spiritual purification. For that it may appear, that our sins have a proper analogy to this sacrament, the body itself is called "the body of sin:" and therefore the washing of the body is not ineffectual towards the great work of pardon and abolition. Indeed, after this ablution there remains concupiscence, or the material part of our misery and sin: for Christ, by his death, only took away that which, when he did die for us, he bare in his own body upon the tree. Now Christ only bare the punishment of our sin, and therefore we shall not die for it; but the material part of the sin Christ bare not: sin could not come so near him; it might make him sick and die, but not disordered and stained. He was pure from original and actual sins; and therefore that remains in the body, though the guilt and punishment be taken off, and changed into advantages and grace; and the actual are relieved by the Spirit of grace descending afterwards upon the church, and sent by our Lord to the same purpose.

33. But it is not rationally to be anwsered what St. Ambrose says[f], "Quia omnis peccato obnoxia, ideo omnis ætas sacramento idonea:" for it were strange that sin and misery should seize upon the innocent and most unconsenting persons; and that they only should be left without a sacrament, and an instrument of expiation. And although they cannot consent to the present susception, yet neither do they refuse; and yet they consent as much to the grace of the sacrament as to the prevarication of Adam; and because they suffer under this, it were but reason they should be relieved by that. And "it were better," as Gregory Nazianzen affirms[g], "that they should be consigned and sanctified without their own knowledge, than to die without their being sanctified;" for so it happened to the circumcised babes of Israel: and if the conspersion and washing the door-posts with the blood of a lamb did sacramentally preserve all the first-born of Goshen; it cannot be thought impossible or unreasonable, that the want of understanding in children should hinder them from the blessing of a sacrament, and from being redeemed and

[f] S. Ambros. de Abraham. Patriar. lib. ii. c. 11.

[g] Greg. Naz. Κρεῖσσον γὰρ ἀναισθήτως ἁγιασθῆναι, ἢ ἀπελθεῖν ἀσφράγιστα καὶ ἀτέλεστα.—*Orat.* xl. in *S. Bapt.*

washed with the blood of the Holy Lamb, "who was slain for all from the beginning of the world."

34. After all this, it is not inconsiderable, that we say the church hath great power and authority about the sacraments; which is observable in many instances. She appointed what persons she pleased, and in equal power made an unequal dispensation and ministry. The apostles first dispensed all things, and then they left off exterior ministries to attend to "the word of God and prayer:" and St. Paul accounted it no part of his office to baptize, when he had been separated by imposition of hands at Antioch to the work of preaching and greater ministries; and accounted that act of the church the act of Christ, saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." They used various forms in the ministration of baptism: sometimes baptizing "in the name of Christ," sometimes expressly invocating the holy and ever-blessed Trinity; one while, "I baptize thee," as in the Latin church, but in the Greek, "Let the servant of Christ be baptized." And, in all ecclesiastical ministries, the church invented the forms, and in most things hath often changed them, as in absolution, excommunication. And sometimes they baptized people under their profession of repentance, and then taught them; as it happened to the gaoler and all his family; in whose case there was no explicit faith aforehand in the mysteries of religion, so far as appears; and yet he, and not only he, but all his house, were baptized at that hour of the night when the earthquake was terrible, and the fear was pregnant upon them; and this upon their master's account, as it is likely: but others were baptized in the conditions of a previous faith, and a new-begun repentance[h]. They baptized in rivers or in lavatories, by dipping or by sprinkling: for so we find that St. Laurence did, as he went to martyrdom; and so the church did sometimes to clinics; and so it is highly convenient to be done in northern countries; according to the prophecy of Isaiah[i], "So shall he sprinkle many nations," according as the typical expiations among the Jews were usually by sprinkling. And it is fairly relative to the mystery, to the "sprinkling with the blood of Christ[k]."

[h] Non ut delinquere desinant, sed quia desierunt, as Tertul. phraseth it.
[i] Isaiah, lii. 15. [k] 1 Peter, i. 2.

and the watering of the furrows of our souls with the dew of heaven, to make them to bring forth fruit unto the Spirit and unto holiness[l]. The church sometimes dipt the catechumen three times, sometimes but once[m]. Some churches use fire in their baptisms; so do the Ethiopians; and the custom was ancient in some places. And so in the other sacrament: sometimes they stood, and sometimes kneeled; and sometimes received it in the mouth, and sometimes in the hand; one while in leavened, another while in unleavened bread: sometimes the wine and water were mingled, sometimes they were pure; and they admitted some persons to it sometimes, which at other times they rejected: sometimes the consecration was made by one form, sometimes by another: and, to conclude, sometimes it was given to infants, sometimes not. And she had power so to do; for in all things, where there was not a commandment of Christ, expressed or implied in the nature and in the end of the institution, the church had power to alter the particulars as was most expedient, or conducing to edification. And although the after-ages of the church, which refused to communicate infants, have found some little things against the lawfulness, and those ages that used it, found out some pretences for its necessity; yet both the one and the other had liberty to follow their own necessities, so in all things they followed Christ. Certainly there is infinitely more reason, why infants may be communicated, than why they may not be baptized. And, that this discourse may revert to its first intention, although there is no record extant of any church in the world, which, from the apostles' days inclusively to this very day, ever refused to baptize their children; yet if they had upon any present reason, they might also change their practice, when the reason should be changed: and therefore, if there were nothing else in it, yet the universal practice of all churches, in all ages, is abundantly sufficient to determine us, and to legitimate the practice, since Christ hath not forbidden it. It is a sufficient confutation to disagreeing people, to use the words of St. Paul, "We have no such

[l] Aqua refectionis, et baptismi lavacrum, quo anima sterilis ariditate peccati ad bonos fructus inferendos divinis muneribus irrigatur. — *Cassiodor.* m. xxiii. ps. 2.

[m] Ἔνιοι τὰ ἅπτα τῶν σφραγισαμένων κατεσημήναντο, dixit Heracleon apud Clem. Alex.

custom, nor the churches of God," to suffer children to be strangers from the covenant of promise, till they shall enter into it as Jews or Turks may enter; that is, by choice and disputation. But although this alone, to modest and obedient, that is, to Christian spirits, be sufficient; yet this is more than the question did need: it can stand upon its proper foundation.

"Quicunque parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, anathema esto[a]. He that refuseth to baptize his infants, shall be in danger of the council."

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who, in thine own person, wert pleased to sanctify the waters of baptism, and, by thy institution and commandment, didst make them effectual to excellent purposes of grace and remedy; be pleased to verify the holy effects of baptism to me and all thy servants, whose names are dedicated to thee in an early and timely presentation, and enable us with thy grace to verify all our promises, by which we were bound then, when thou didst first make us thy own portion and relatives in the consummation of a holy covenant. O be pleased to pardon all those indecencies and unhandsome interruptions of that state of favour, in which thou didst plant us by thy grace, and admit us by the gates of baptism: and let that Spirit, which moved upon those holy waters, never be absent from us, but call upon us, and invite us, by a perpetual argument and daily solicitations and inducements to holiness; that we may never return to the filthiness of sin, but, by the answer of a good conscience, may please thee, and glorify thy name, and do honour to thy religion and institution in this world, and may receive the blessings and the rewards of it in the world to come, being presented to thee pure and spotless in the day of thy power, when thou shalt lead thy church to a kingdom and endless glories. Amen.

[a] Conc. Milevit. can. 2.

APPENDIX AD SECT. IX. No. 3. OF JESUS BEING BAPTIZED, &c.

Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.

[a]

Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.

O Father, according to the good pleasure of thy will, I am made a man; and from the time, in which I was born of a virgin, unto this day, I have finished those things, which are agreeing to the nature of man; and, with due ob-

[a] Hanc orationem transcripsit et transmisit eruditissimus vir, et linguarum Orientalium apprimè gnarus, Dud. Loftus, J. U. D. et Juris Civilis Professor publicus in Academia Dubliniensi apud Hibernos, professor linguarum Orientalium apud eosdem.

servance, have performed all thy commandments, the mysteries and types of the law: and now truly I am baptized; and so have I ordained baptism, that from thence, as from the place of spiritual birth, the regeneration of men may be accomplished: and as John was the last of the legal priests, so am I the first of the evangelical. Thou therefore, O Father, by the mediation of my prayer, open the heavens, and from thence send thy Holy Spirit upon this womb of baptism; that as he did untie the womb of the virgin, and thence form me, so also he would loose this baptismal womb, and so sanctify it unto men, that from thence new men may be begotten, who may become thy sons, and my brethren, and heirs of thy kingdom. And what the priests under the law, until John, could not do, grant unto the priests of the New Testament, (whose chief I am in the oblation of this prayer,) that whensoever they shall celebrate baptism, or pour forth prayers unto thee, as the Holy Spirit is seen with me in open vision, so also it may be made manifest, that the same Spirit will adjoin himself in their society a more secret way, and will by them perform the ministries of the New Testament, for which I am made a man; and as the high priest, I do offer these prayers in thy sight.

This prayer was transcribed out of the Syriac Catena, upon the third chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and is, by the author of that Catena, reported to have been made by our blessed Saviour immediately before the opening of the heavens at his baptism: and that the Holy Spirit did descend upon him, while he was thus praying: and for it he cites the authority of S. Philoxenus. I cannot but foresee, that there is one clause in it, which will be used as an objection against the authority of this prayer; viz. "as John was the last of the legal priests:" for he was no priest at all, nor ever officiated in the temple, or at the Mosaic rites. But this is nothing: because, that the Baptist was of the family of the priests, his father Zachary is a demonstration; that he did not officiate, his being employed in another ministry is a sufficient answer; that he was the last of the priests is to be understood in this sense, that he was the period of the law, the common term between the law and the

Gospel: by him the Gospel was first preached solemnly, and therefore in him the law first ended. And as he was the last of the prophets, so he was the last of the priests: not but that, after him, many had the gift of prophecy, and some did officiate in the Mosaical priesthood; but that his office put the first period to the solemnity of Moses's law; that is, at him the dispensation evangelical did first enter.

That the ministers of the Gospel are here called priests, ought not to be a prejudice against this prayer in the persuasions of any men; because it was usual with our blessed Saviour to retain the words of the Jews, his countrymen, before whom he spake, that they might by words, to which they were used, be instructed in the notice of persons and things, offices and ministries evangelical, which afterwards were to be represented under other, that is, under their proper names.

And now all that I shall say of it is this: 1. That it is not unlikely but our blessed Saviour prayed, when he was baptized, and when the Holy Ghost descended upon him; not only because it was an employment symbolical to the grace he was to receive, but also to become to us a precedent by what means we are to receive the Holy Spirit of God. 2. That it is very likely our blessed Lord would consecrate the waters of baptism to those mysterious ends whither he designed them, as well as the bread and chalice of the holy supper. 3. That it is most likely the Easterlings did preserve a record of many words and actions of the holy Jesus, which are not transmitted to us. 4. It is certain that our blessed Lord did do and say many more things, than are in the holy Scriptures; and that this was one of them, we have the credit of this ancient author, and the authority of St. Philoxenus. However, it is much better to make such good use of it as the matter and piety of the prayer will minister, than to quarrel at it by the imperfection of uncertain conjectures.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LADY,

THE

LADY MARY,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF NORTHAMPTON.

I AM now to present to your Honour part of that production, of which your great love to sanctity was parent; and which was partly designed to satisfy those great appetites to virtue, which have made you hugely apprehensive and forward to entertain any instrument, whereby you may grow and increase in the service of God, and the communion and charities of holy people. Your Honour best knows, in what soil the first design of these papers grew; and, but that the excellent personage who was their first root, is transplanted for a time, that he might not have his righteous soul vexed with the impurer conversation of ill-minded men, I am confident you would have received the fruits of his abode to more excellent purposes. But because he was pleased to leave the managing of this to me, I hope your Honour will, for his sake, enter-

tain what that rare person "conceived," though I was left to the pains and danger of "bringing forth;" and that it may dwell with you for its first relation, rather than be rejected for its appendant imperfections, which it contracted not in the fountain, but in the channels of its progress and emanation. Madam, I shall beg of God that your Honour may receive as great increment of piety and ghostly strength in the reading this book, as I receive honour if you shall be pleased to accept and own this as a confession of your great worthiness, and a testimony of the service, which ought to be paid to your Honour, by,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most humble

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

SECTION X.

Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony of John, and a Miracle.

1. After that the Baptist, by a sign from heaven, was confirmed in spirit and understanding, that Jesus was the Messias, he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifested to him; and first to the priests and Levites, sent in legation from the Sanhedrim, he professed indefinitely, in answer to their question, that himself was "not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet," whom they, by a special tradition, did expect to be revealed, they knew not when. And concerning himself definitely he said nothing, but that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." He it was who was then "amongst them," but "not known," a person of great dignity, to whom the Baptist was "not worthy" to do the office of the lowest ministry, "who, coming after John, was preferred far before him[a]," who was to increase[b], and the Baptist was to decrease, who did "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire[c]."

[a] John, i. 15, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 30. [b] John, iii. 30.
[c] Matt. iii. 11.

2. This was the character of his personal prerogatives; but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus, and then whenever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world; this is he[d]." Then he shows him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, with the same designation, and to another disciple with him, "who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night[e]:" Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and then Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which signifies a stone. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathanael, and calls him to see. Thus persons bred in a dark cell, upon their first ascent to the chambers of light, all run staring upon the beauties of the sun, and call the partners of their darkness to communicate in their new and stranger revelation.

3. When Nathanael was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony to be truly honest, and full of holy simplicity, "a true Israelite, without guile." And Nathanael, being overjoyed that he had found the Messias, believing out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, and no suspicion, took that for a proof and verification of his person, which was very insufficient to confirm a doubt, or ratify a probability: but so we believe a story which we love, taking probabilities for demonstrations, and casual accidents for probabilities, and any thing creates vehement presumptions; in which cases our guides are not our knowing faculties, but our affections; and if they be holy, God guides them into the right persuasions, as he does little birds to make rare nests, though they understand not the mystery of operation, nor the design and purpose of the action.

4. But Jesus took his will and forwardness of affections in so good part, that he promised him greater things; and this gave occasion to the first prophecy, which was made by Jesus. For "Jesus said unto him, Because I said I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these:" and then he prophesied, that he should see "heaven open, and the angels of God ascending

[d] John, i. 29, 36. [e] John, i. 37, 39.

and descending upon the Son of Man." But, being a doctor of the law, Christ chose him not at all to the college of apostles[f].

5. Much about the same time, there happened to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee, in the vicinage of his dwelling, where John the Evangelist is, by some, supposed to have been the bridegroom; (but of this there is no certainty:) and thither Jesus being, with his mother, invited, he went to do civility to the persons espoused, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. The persons then married were but of indifferent fortunes, richer in love of neighbours than in the fulness of rich possessions; they had more company than wine. For the master of the feast, (whom, according to the order and piety of the nation, they chose from the order of priests, to be president of the feast[g], by the reverence of his person to restrain all inordination, by his discretion to govern and order the circumstances, by his religious knowledge to direct the solemnities of marriage, and to retain all the persons and actions in the bounds of prudence and modesty,) complained to the bridegroom that the guests wanted wine.

6. As soon as the holy Virgin-mother had notice of the want, out of charity, that uses to be employed in supplying even the minutes and smallest articles of necessity, as well as the clamorous importunity of extremities and great indigences, she complained to her son by an indefinite address; not desiring him to make supply, for she knew not how he should; but either, out of an habitual commiseration, she complained without hoping for remedy, or else she looked on him, who was a fountain of holiness and of plenty, as expecting a derivation from him, either of discourses or miracles. But "Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." By this answer intending no denial to the purpose of his mother's

[f] S. Aug. tra. xvii. c. 1. in Joan.

[g] Hujusmodi fuerunt modesta illa Sertorii convivia quæ descripsit Plutarchus. — *Gaudent. Brixian.* tra. 9.

Δεῖπνα πολλὴν ἔχοντα αἰδῶ καὶ κόσμον· οὐδὲ ἐρᾷν τι τῶν αἰσχρῶν ὄντα ἀκούειν ὑποφέροντος· ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς συνόντας ἐντάκτους καὶ ἀνυβρίστους παιδιαῖς χρῆσθαι καὶ φιλοφρονήμασι ἰθίζοντος. — *Plut. in Sertor.*

intimation, to whom he always bore a religious and pious reverence; but to signify, that he was not yet entered into his period and years of miracles; and when he did, it must be not for respect of kindred or civil relations, but as it is a derivation of power from above, so it must be in pursuit of that service and design, which he had received in charge together with his power.

7. And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the ministers, to do whatsoever he commanded. Jesus, therefore, bade them "fill the water-pots," which stood there for the use of frequent washings, which the Jews did use in all public meetings, for fear of touching pollutions, or contracting legal impurities: which they did with a curiousness next to superstition, washing the very beds and tables used at their feasts. The ministers "filled them to the brim;" and, as they were commanded, "drew out, and bare unto the governor of the feast," who "knew not of it," till the miracle grew public, and like light, showed itself; for while they wondered at the economy of that feast, in "keeping the best wine till the last," it grew apparent, that he who was the Lord of the creatures, who, in their first seeds, have an obediential capacity, to receive the impresses of what forms he pleases to imprint, could give new natures, and produce new qualities in that subject, in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

8. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee." For all those miracles, which are reported to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, feigned by trifling understandings, (who think to serve God with a well-meant lie,) and promoted by the credulity of such persons, in whose hearts, easiness, folly, and credulity, are bound up, and tied fast with silken thread, and easy softnesses of religious affections, not made severe by the rigours of wisdom and experience. This first miracle "manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him."

Ad SECTION X.

Considerations touching the Vocation of five Disciples, and of the first Miracle of Jesus, done at Cana, in Galilee.

1. As soon as ever John the Baptist was taught, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, that this was Jesus, he instantly preaches him to all that came near him. For the Holy Ghost was his commission and instruction; and now he was a minister evangelical, and taught all those that have the honour to be servants in so sacred employment, that they must not go till they be sent, nor speak till they be instructed, nor yet hold their peace when their commission is signed by the consignation of the Spirit in ordinary ministry. For "all power and all wisdom is from above," and in spiritual ministrations is a direct emanation from the Holy Spirit: that as no man is fit to speak the mysteries of godliness, be his person never so holy, unless he derive wisdom in order to such ministries; so, be he never so instructed by the assistance of art or infused knowledge, yet, unless he also have derived power as well as skill, authority as well as knowledge, from the same Spirit, he is not enabled to minister in public in ordinary ministrations. The Baptist was sent by a prime designation, "to prepare the way to Jesus," and was instructed by the same Spirit, which had sanctified or consecrated him in his mother's womb to this holy purpose.

2. When the Baptist had showed Jesus to Andrew and another disciple, they immediately followed him, with the distances and fears of the first approach, and the infirmities of new converts; but Jesus seeing them follow their first light, invited them to see the Sun: for God loves to cherish infants in grace; and having sown the immortal seed in their hearts, if it takes root downwards, and springs out into the verdure of a leaf, he still waters it with the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit, in graces and new assistances, till it brings forth the fruits of a holy conversation. And God, who knows that infants have need of pleasant, and gentle, and frequent nutriment, hath given to them this comfort, that himself will take care of their first beginnings, and improve them to the strength

of men, and give them the strengths of nature, and the wisdom of the Spirit, which ennoble men to excellences and perfections. By the preaching of the Baptist they were brought to seek for Christ: and when they did, Christ found them, and brought them home, and made them "stay all night with him;" which was more favour than they looked for. For so God usually dispenses his mercies, that they may run over our thoughts and expectations, and they are given in no proportion to us, but according to God's measures; he considering not what we are worthy of, but what is fit for him to give; he only requiring of us capacities to receive his favour, and fair reception and entertainment of his graces.

3. When Andrew had found Jesus, he calls his brother Simon to be partaker of his joys, which (as it happens in accidents of greatest pleasure) cannot be contained within the limits of the possessor's thoughts. But this calling of Peter was not to a beholding, but to a participation of his felicities: for he is strangely covetous who would enjoy the sun, or the air, or the sea, alone; here was treasure for him and all the world: and, by lighting his brother Simon's taper, he made his own light the greater and more glorious. And this is the nature of grace, to be diffusive of its own excellences; for here no envy can inhabit: the proper and personal ends of holy persons, in the contract and transmissions of grace, are increased by the participation and communion of others. For our prayers are more effectual, our aids increased, our encouragement and examples more prevalent, God more honoured, and the rewards of glory have accidental advantages, by the superaddition of every new saint and beatified person; the members of the mystical body, when they have received nutriment from God and his holy Son, supplying to each other the same which themselves received, and live on, in the communion of saints. Every new star gilds the firmament, and increases its first glories: and those who are instruments of the conversion of others, shall not only introduce new beauties, but when themselves "shine like the stars in glory," they shall have some reflections from the light of others, to whose fixing in the orb of heaven themselves have been instrumental. And this consideration is not only of use in the exaltations of the dignity apostolical and clerical, but for the enkindling even of private

charities; who may do well to promote others' interests of piety, in which themselves also have some concernment.

4. These disciples asked of Christ where he dwelt: Jesus answered, "Come and see." It was an answer very expressive of our duty in this instance. It is not enough for us to understand where Christ inhabits, or where he is to be found; for our understandings may follow him afar off, and we receive no satisfaction unless it be to curiosity; but we must go where he is, eat of his meat, wash in his lavatory, rest on his beds, and dwell with him: for the holy Jesus hath no kind influence upon those who stand at distance, save only the affections of a loadstone, apt to draw them nigher, that he may transmit his virtues by union and confederations; but if they persist in a sullen distance, they shall learn his glories, as Dives understood the peace of Lazarus, of which he was never to participate. Although "the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head," yet he hath many houses where to convey his graces; he hath nothing to cover his own, but he hath enough to sanctify ours: and as he dwelt in such houses which the charity of good people then afforded for his entertainment; so now he loves to abide in places, which the religion of his servants hath vowed to his honour, and the advantages of evangelical ministrations. Thither we must come to him, or anywhere else where we may enjoy him: he is to be found in a church, in his ordinances, in the communion of saints, in every religious duty, in the heart of every holy person; and if we go to him by the addresses of religion in holy places, by the ministry of holy rites, by charity, by the adherences of faith, and hope, and other combining graces, the graces of union and society, or prepare a lodging for him within us, that he may come to us, then shall we see such glories and interior beauties, which none know, but they that dwell with him. The secrets of spiritual benediction are understood only by them, to whom they are conveyed, even by the children of his house[a]. "Come and see."

5. St. Andrew was first called, and that by Christ immediately; his brother Simon next, and that by Andrew; but yet Jesus changed Simon's name, and not the other's; and by this change designed him to an eminency of office, at

[a] Secreta mea mihi et filiis domûs meæ.—*Clem. Alex. Strom.*

least in signification, principally above his brother, or else separately and distinctly from him: to show that these graces and favours, which do not immediately co-operate to eternity, but are gifts and offices, or impresses of authority, are given to men irregularly, and without any order of predisponent causes, or probabilities on our part, but are issues of absolute predestination; and as they have efficacy from those reasons, which God conceals, so they have some purposes as concealed as their causes; only if God pleases to make us vessels of fair employment and of great capacity, we shall bear a greater burden, and are bound to glorify God with special offices. But as these exterior and ineffective graces are given upon the same good will of God, which made this matter to be a human body, when, if God had so pleased, it was as capable of being made a fungus or a sponge: so they are given to us with the same intentions as are our souls, that we might glorify God in the distinct capacity of grace, as before of a reasonable nature. And, besides that it teaches us to magnify God's free mercy, so it removes every such exalted person from being an object of envy to others, or from pleasing himself in vainer opinions: for God hath made him of such an employment, as freely and voluntarily as he hath made him a man, and he no more co-operated to this grace than to his own creation, and may as well admire himself for being born in Italy, or from rich parents, or for having two hands or two feet, as for having received such a designation extraordinary. But these things are never instruments of reputation among severe understandings, and never but in the sottish and unmanly apprehensions of the vulgar. Only this, when God hath imprinted an authority upon a person, although the man hath nothing to please himself withal but God's grace, yet others are to pay the duty, which that impression demands; which duty, because it rapports to God, and touches not the man, but as it passes through him to the fountain of authority and grace, it extinguishes all pretences of opinion and pride.

6. When Jesus espied Nathanael (who also had been called by the first disciples) coming towards him, he gave him an excellent character, calling him "a true Israelite, in whom was no guile," and admitted him amongst the first disciples of the institution; by this character in one of the

first of his scholars hallowing simplicity of spirit, and receiving it into his discipline, that it might now become a virtue and duty evangelical. For although it concerns us, as a Christian duty, to be prudent, yet the prudence of Christianity is a duty of spiritual effect, and in instances of religion with no other purposes than to avoid giving offence to those, that are without and within; that we cause no disreputation to Christianity; that we do nothing that may encourage enemies to the religion; and that those that are within the communion and obedience of the church, may not suffer as great inconveniences by the indiscreet conduct of religious actions, as by direct temptations to a sin. These are the purposes of private prudence, to which, in a greater measure, and upon more variety of rules, the governors of churches are obliged. But that which Christian simplicity prohibits, is the mixing arts and unhandsome means for the purchase of our ends; witty counsels that are underminings of our neighbour, destroying his just interest to serve our own; stratagems to deceive, indefinite and insignificant answers, with fraudulent design; unjust and unlawful concealment of our purposes; fallacious promises and false pretences; flattery, and unjust, and unreasonable praise; saying one thing and meaning the contrary; pretending religion to secular designs; breaking faith; taking false oaths; and such other instruments of human purposes framed by the devil, and sent into the world to be perfected by man. Christian simplicity speaks nothing but its thoughts; and when it concerns prudence that a thought or purpose should be concealed, it concerns simplicity that silence be its cover, and not a false vizor; it rather suffers inconvenience than a lie; it destroys no man's right, though it be inconsistent with my advantages; it reproves freely, palliates no man's wickedness; it intends what it ought, and does what is bidden; and uses courses regular and just, sneaks not in corners, and walks always in the eye of God and the face of the world.

7. Jesus told Nathanael that he knew him, when he saw him "under the fig-tree;" and Nathanael took that to be probation sufficient that he was the Messias, and believed rightly upon an insufficient motive: which, because Jesus did accept, it gives testimony to us, that however faith be produced, by means regular or by arguments incompetent,

whether it be proved or not proved, whether by chance or deliberation, whether wisely or by occasion, so that faith be produced by the instrument, and love by faith, God's work is done, and so is ours. For if St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by the envy of peevish persons; certainly God will not reject an excellent product, because it came from a weak and sickly parent: and he that brings good out of evil, and rejoices in that good, having first triumphed upon the evil, will certainly take delight in the faith of the most ignorant persons, which his own grace hath produced out of innocent, though insufficient, beginnings. It was folly in Naaman to refuse to be cured, because he was to recover only by washing in Jordan. The more incompetent the means is, the greater is the glory of God, who hath produced waters from a rock, and fire from the collision of a sponge and wool; and it is certain, the end, unless it be in products merely natural, does not take its estimate and degrees from the external means. Grace does miracles, and the productions of the Spirit in respect of its instruments are equivocal, extraordinary, and supernatural; and ignorant persons believe as strongly, though they know not why, and love God as heartily, as greater spirits and more excellent understandings: and when God pleases, or if he sees it expedient, he will do to others as to Nathanael, give them greater arguments and better instruments for the confirmation and heightening of their faith, than they had for the first production.

8. When Jesus had chosen these few disciples to be witnesses of succeeding accidents, every one of which was to be a probation of his mission and divinity, he entered into the theatre of the world at a marriage feast, which he now first hallowed to a sacramental signification, and made to become mysterious: he now began to choose his spouse out from the communities of the world, and did mean to endear her by unions ineffable and glorious, and consign the sacrament by his blood, which he first gave in a secret representment, and afterwards in letter and apparent effusion. And although the holy Jesus did in his own person consecrate celibate, and abstinence, and chastity in his mother's: yet, by his presence, he also hallowed marriage, and made it honourable, not only in civil account and the rites of heraldry,

but in a spiritual sense, he having new sublimed it by making it a sacramental representment of the union of Christ and his spouse, the church. And all married persons should do well to remember what the conjugal society does represent, and not break the matrimonial bond, which is a mysterious ligament of Christ and his church; for whoever dissolves the sacredness of the mystery, and unhallows the vow by violence and impurity, he dissolves his relation to Christ. To break faith with a wife or husband is a divorce from Jesus, and that is a separation from all possibilities of felicity. In the time of the Mosaical statutes, to violate marriage was to do injustice and dishonour, and a breach to the sanctions of nature, or the first constitutions: but two bands more are added in the Gospel, to make marriage more sacred. For now our bodies are made "temples of the Holy Ghost," and the rite of marriage is made significant and sacramental, and every act of adultery is profanation and irreligion; it desecrates a temple, and deflowers a mystery.

9. The married pair were holy, but poor, and they wanted wine; and the blessed Virgin-mother, pitying the affront of the young man, complained to Jesus of the want; and Jesus gave her an answer, which promised no satisfaction to her purposes. For now that Jesus had lived thirty years, and done in person nothing answerable to his glorious birth, and the miraculous accidents of his person, she longed till the time came, in which he was to manifest himself by actions as miraculous as the star of his birth: she knew, by the rejecting of his trade, and his going abroad, and probably by his own discourse to her, that the time was near; and the forwardness of her love and holy desires possibly might go some minutes before his own precise limit. However, Jesus answered to this purpose, to show, that the work he was to do, was done not to satisfy her importunity, which is not occasion enough for a miracle, but to prosecute the great work of Divine designation. For, in works spiritual and religious, all exterior relation ceases. The world's order, and the manner of our nature, and the infirmities of our person, have produced societies, and they have been the parents of relation; and God hath tied them fast by the knots of duty, and made the duty the occasion and opportunities of reward: but in actions spiritual, in which we relate to God, our

relations are founded upon the Spirit, and therefore we must do our duties upon considerations separate and spiritual, but never suffer temporal relations to impede our religious duties. Christian charity is a higher thing than to be confined within the terms of dependence and correlation[b], and those endearments, which leagues, or nature, or society, have made, pass into spiritual, and, like stars in the presence of the sun, appear not, when the heights of the Spirit are in place. Where duty hath prepared special instances, there we must, for religion's sake, promote them; but, even to our parents or our children, the charities of religion ought to be greater than the affections of society: and though we are bound, in all offices exterior, to prefer our relatives before others, because that is made a duty; yet to purposes spiritual, all persons eminently holy put on the efficacy of the same relations, and pass a duty upon us of religious affections.

10. At the command of Jesus the water-pots were filled with water, and the water was, by his Divine power, turned into wine; where the different economy of God and the world is highly observable. "Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse:" but God not only turns the water into wine, but into such wine, that the last draught is most pleasant. The world presents us with fair language, promising hopes, convenient fortunes, pompous honours, and these are the outsides of the bole; but when it is swallowed, these dissolve in the instant, and there remains bitterness, and the malignity of coloquinteda. Every sin smiles in the first address, and carries light in the face, and honey in the lip; but "when we have well drunk, then comes that which is worse," a whip with six strings, fears and terrors of conscience, and shame and displeasure, and a caitive disposition, and diffidence in the day of death. But when, after the manner of the purifying of the Christians, we fill our water-pots with water, watering our couch with our tears, and moistening our cheeks with the perpetual distillations of repentance; then Christ turns our water into wine; first penitents, and then communicants; first waters of sorrow, and then the wine of the chalice; first the justifications of

[b] Συγγένεια γὰρ οἰκειοτέρα ἡ πρὸς δικαιοσύνην καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν ὁμιλία.— *Philo in Exposit. General.*

correction, and then the sanctifications of the sacrament, and the effects of the Divine power, joy, and peace, and serenity, hopes full of confidence, and confidence without shame, and boldness without presumption: for "Jesus keeps the best wine till the last;" not only because of the direct reservations of the highest joys till the nearer approaches of glory, but also because our relishes are higher after a long fruition than at the first essays; such being the nature of grace, that it increases in relish as it does in fruition, every part of grace being new duty and new reward.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu, who didst choose disciples to be witnesses of thy life and miracles, so adopting man into a participation of thy great employment of bringing us to heaven by the means of a holy doctrine; be pleased to give me thy grace, that I may love and revere their persons, whom thou hast set over me, and follow their faith, and imitate their lives, while they imitate thee; and that I also, in my capacity and proportion, may do some of the meaner offices of spiritual building, by prayers, and by holy discourses, and fraternal correption, and friendly exhortations, doing advantages to such souls, with whom I shall converse. And since thou wert pleased to enter upon the stage of the world with the commencement of mercy and a miracle, be pleased to visit my soul with thy miraculous grace, turn my water into wine, my natural desires into supernatural perfections, and let my sorrows be turned into joys, my sins into virtuous habits, the weaknesses of humanity into communications of the Divine nature; that since thou "keepest the best unto the last," I may, by thy assistance, grow from grace to grace, till thy gifts be turned to reward, and thy graces to participation of thy glory, O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of Faith.

1. NATHANAEL's faith was produced by an argument not demonstrative, not certainly concluding; Christ knew him when he saw him first, and he believed him to be the Messias: his faith was excellent, whatever the argument was. And I believe a God, because the sun is a glorious body; or because of the variety of plants, or the fabric and rare contexture of a man's eye: I may as fully assent to the conclusion, as if my belief dwelt upon the demonstrations made by the prince of philosophers in the eighth of his physics and twelfth of his metaphysics. This I premise as an inlet into the consideration concerning the faith of ignorant persons. For if we consider, upon what easy terms most of us now are Christians, we may possibly suspect, that either faith hath but little excellence in it, or we but little faith, or that we are mistaken generally in its definition. For we are born of Christian parents, made Christians at ten days old, interrogated concerning the articles of our faith by way of anticipation, even then when we understand not the difference between the sun and a tallow-candle: from thence we are taught to say our catechism, as we are taught to speak, when we have no reason to judge, no discourse to discern, no arguments to contest against a proposition, in case we be catechized into false doctrine; and all that is put to us we believe infinitely, and without choice, as children use not to choose their language. And as our children are made Christians, just so are thousand others made Mahumetans, with the same necessity, the same facility. So that, thus far, there is little thanks due to us for believing the Christian creed; it was indifferent to us at first, and at last our education had so possessed us, and our interest, and our no temptation to the contrary, that as we were disposed into this condition by Providence, so we remain in it without praise or excellence. For as our beginnings are inevitable, so our progress is imperfect and insufficient; and what we began by education, we retain only by custom: and if we be instructed in some slighter arguments to maintain the sect

or faction of our country-religion, as it disturbs the unity of Christendom; yet, if we examine and consider the account, upon what slight arguments we have taken up Christianity itself, (as, that it is the religion of our country, or that our fathers before us were of the same faith, or because the priest bids us, and he is a good man, or for something else, but we know not what,) we must needs conclude it the good providence of God, not our choice, that made us Christians.

2. But if the question be, Whether such a faith be in itself good and acceptable, that relies upon insufficient and unconvincing grounds? I suppose this case of Nathanael will determine us: and when we consider that faith is an infused grace, if God pleases to behold his own glory in our weakness of understanding, it is but the same thing he does in the instances of his other graces. For as God enkindles charity upon variety of means and instruments, by a thought, by a chance, by a text of Scripture, by a natural tenderness, by the sight of a dying or a tormented beast: so also he may produce faith by arguments of a differing quality, and by issues of his providence, he may engage us in such conditions, in which, as our understanding is not great enough to choose the best, so neither is it furnished with powers to reject any proposition: and to believe well is an effect of a singular predestination, and is a gift in order to a grace, as that grace is in order to salvation. But the insufficiency of an argument, or disability to prove our religion, is so far from disabling the goodness of an ignorant man's faith, that as it may be as strong as the faith of the greatest scholar, so it hath full as much excellence, not of nature, but in order to Divine acceptance. For as he who believes upon the only stock of education, made no election of his faith; so he who believes what is demonstrably proved, is forced by the demonstration to his choice. Neither of them did choose, and both of them may equally love the article.

3. So that since a small argument in a weak understanding, does the same work that a strong argument in a more sober and learned, that is, it convinces and makes faith, and yet neither of them is matter of choice; if the thing believed be good, and matter of duty or necessity, the faith is not rejected by God upon the weakness of the first, nor accepted upon the strength of the latter principles; when we are

once in, it will not be inquired by what entrance we passed thither; whether God leads us or drives us in, whether we come by discourse or by inspiration, by the guide of an angel or the conduct of Moses, whether we be born or made Christians, it is indifferent, so we be there, where we should be; for this is but the gate of duty, and the entrance to felicity. For thus far faith is but an act of the understanding, which is a natural faculty, serving indeed as an instrument to godliness, but of itself no part of it; and it is just like fire producing its act inevitably, and burning as long as it can, without power to interrupt or suspend its action; and therefore we cannot be more pleasing to God for understanding rightly, than the fire is for burning clearly: which puts us evidently upon this consideration, that Christian faith, that glorious duty, which gives to Christians a great degree of approximation to God by Jesus Christ, must have a great proportion of that ingredient, which makes actions good or bad, that is, of choice and effect.

4. For the faith of a Christian hath more in it of the will than of the understanding. Faith is that great mark of distinction, which separates and gives formality to the covenant of the Gospel, which is a "law of faith." The faith of a Christian is his religion, that is, it is that whole conformity to the institution or discipline of Jesus Christ, which distinguishes him from the believers of false religions. And to be one of the faithful signifies the same with being a disciple; and that contains obedience as well as believing. For to the same sense are all those appellatives in Scripture, "the faithful, brethren, believers, the saints, disciples," all representing the duty of a Christian. A believer and a saint, or a holy person, is the same thing; brethren signifies charity, and believers faith in the intellectual sense: the faithful and disciples signify both; for besides the consent to the proposition, the first of them is also used for perseverance and sanctity, and the greatest of charity mixed with a confident faith up to the height of martyrdom. "Be faithful unto the death, (said the Holy Spirit), and I will give thee the crown of life[a]." And when the apostles, by way of abbreviation, express all the body of Christian religion, they call it "faith

[a] Rev. ii. 10.

working by love[b];" which also St. Paul, in a parallel place, calls a "new creature[c];" it is "a keeping of the commandments of God[d]:" that is the faith of a Christian, into whose definition charity is ingredient, whose sense is the same with keeping of God's commandments; so that if we define faith, we must first distinguish it. The faith of a natural person, or the faith of devils, is a mere believing a certain number of propositions upon conviction of the understanding: but the faith of a Christian, the faith that justifies and saves him, is "faith working by charity," or "faith keeping the commandments of God[e]." They are distinct faiths, in order to different ends, and therefore of different constitution; and the instrument of distinction is charity or obedience.

5. And this great truth is clear in the perpetual testimony of holy Scripture. For Abraham is called the "father of the faithful;" and yet our blessed Saviour told the Jews, that if they had been "the sons of Abraham, they would have done the works of Abraham[f];" and therefore good works are, by the apostle, called the "footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham[g]." For faith, in every of its stages, at its first beginning, at its increment, at its greatest perfection, is a duty made up of the concurrence of the will and the understanding, when it pretends to the Divine acceptance; faith and repentance begin the Christian course. "Repent and believe the Gospel," was the sum of the apostle's sermons; and all the way after it is, "faith working by love." Repentance puts the first spirit and life into faith, and charity preserves it, and gives it nourishment and increase; itself also growing by a mutual supply of spirits and nutriment from faith. Whoever does heartily believe a resurrection and life eternal, upon certain conditions, will certainly endeavour to acquire the promises, by the purchase of obedience and observation of the conditions. For it is not in the nature or power of man directly to despise and reject so infinite a good: so that faith supplies charity with argument and maintenance, and charity supplies faith with life and motion; faith makes charity reasonable, and charity makes faith living and effectual. And, therefore, the old Greeks called faith and charity a miraculous chariot

[b] Gal. v. 6. [c] Gal. vi. 15. [d] 1 Cor. vii. 19.
[e] Gal. v. 6. [f] John, viii. 39. [g] Rom. iv. 12.

or yoke[h], they bear the burden of the Lord with an equal confederation: these are like Hippocrates' twins, they live and die together. Indeed faith is the first-born of the twins; but they must come both at a birth, or else they die, being strangled at the gates of the womb. But if charity, like Jacob, lays hold upon his elder brother's heel, it makes a timely and a prosperous birth, and gives certain title to the eternal promises. For let us give the right of primogeniture to faith, yet the blessing, yea, and the inheritance too, will at last fall to charity. Not that faith is disinherited, but that charity only enters into the possession. The nature of faith passes into the excellence of charity before they can be rewarded; and that both may have their estimate, that which justifies and saves us, keeps the name of faith, but doth not do the deed till it hath the nature of charity. For to think well, or to have a good opinion, or an excellent or a fortunate understanding, entitles us not to the love of God, and the consequent inheritance[i]; but to choose the ways of the Spirit, and to relinquish the paths of darkness, this is the way of the kingdom, and the purpose of the Gospel, and the proper work of faith.

6. And if we consider upon what stock faith itself is instrumental and operative of salvation, we shall find it is, in itself, acceptable, because it is a duty, and commanded; and therefore it is an act of obedience, a work of the Gospel, a submitting the understanding, a denying the affections, a laying aside all interests, and a bringing our thoughts under the obedience of Christ. This the apostle calls "the obedience of faith[k]." And it is of the same condition and constitution with other graces, all which equally relate to Christ, and are as firm instruments of union, and are washed by the blood of Christ, and are sanctified by his death, and apprehend him in their capacity and degrees, some higher, and some not so high: but hope and charity apprehend Christ in a measure and proportion greater than faith, when

[h] Θαυμαστὸν ζυγοῦ.

[i] Τὸ ἀγαθοὺς μὲν εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἢ κακούς, ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἐν τῇ γνώσει ἴδιαις γνωσταμένων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ αἱρέσει τῶν αἱρουμένων. — *Just. M. Resp. ad Orthod.*

Οὐδὲν κέρδος ἰγιεῖς πίστεως, τῆς πολιτείας διαφθαρείσης. — *Chrys.* lib. iv. *de Sacerd.*

[k] Rom. xvi. 26.

it distinguishes from them. So that if faith does the work of justification, as it is a mere relation to Christ, then so also does hope and charity; or if these are duties and good works, so also is faith: and they all being alike commanded in order to the same end, and encouraged by the same reward, are also accepted upon the same stock, which is, that they are acts of obedience and relation too; they obey Christ, and lay hold upon Christ's merits, and are but several instances of the great duty of a Christian, but the actions of several faculties of the new creature. But because faith is the beginning of grace, and hath influence and causality in the production of the other, therefore all the other, as they are united in duty, are also united in their title and appellative; they are all called by the name of faith, because they are parts of faith, as faith is taken in the larger sense: and when it is taken in the strictest and distinguishing sense, they are effects and proper products by way of natural emanation.

7. That a good life is the genuine and true-born issue of faith, no man questions, that knows himself the disciple of the holy Jesus; but that obedience is the same thing with faith[l], and that all Christian graces are parts of its bulk and constitution, is also the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the grammar of Scripture, making faith and obedience to be terms coincident and expressive of each other. For faith is not a single star, but a constellation, a chain of graces, called by St. Paul "the power of God unto salvation to every believer[m];" that is, faith is all that great instrument, by which God intends to bring us to heaven: and he gives this reason, "In the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;" for "it is written, The just shall live by faith." Which discourse makes faith to be a course of sanctity and holy habits, a continuation of a Christian's duty, such a duty as not only gives the first breath, but by which a man lives the life of grace. "The just shall live by faith;" that is, such a faith as grows from step to step, till the whole righteousness of God be fulfilled in it. "From faith to faith,"

[l] Fides (auctore Cicerone) est firma opinio, et est fida mandatorum executio. Dicta est autem fides (ut ait idem Cicero de Officiis) à *fio*, quòd id *fieri* debeat, quod dictum et promissum est.

[m] Rom. i. 16, 17.

(saith the apostle;) which St. Austin expounds, from faith believing, to faith obeying [n]; from imperfect faith, to faith made perfect by the animation of charity; that "he who is justified, may be justified still." For as there are several degrees and parts of justification, so there are several degrees of faith answerable to it; that in all senses it may be true, that "by faith we are justified, and by faith we live, and by faith we are saved." For if we proceed "from faith to faith," from believing to obeying, from faith in the understanding to faith in the will, from faith barely assenting to the revelations of God, to faith obeying the commandments of God, from the body of faith to the soul of faith, that is, to faith formed and made alive by charity; then we shall proceed from justification to justification, that is, from remission of sins to become the sons of God, and at last to an actual possession of those glories, to which we were here consigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

8. And in this sense the holy Jesus is called by the apostle "the author and finisher of our faith [o]:" he is the principle, and he is the promoter; he begins our faith in revelations, and perfects it in commandments; he leads us by the assent of our understanding, and finishes the work of his grace by a holy life: which St. Paul there expresses by its several constituent parts; as "laying aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and running with patience the race that is set before us, resisting unto blood, striving against sin [p];" for, in these things, Jesus is therefore made our example, because he is "the author and finisher of our faith;" without these faith is imperfect. But the thing is something plainer yet, for St. James says, that faith lives not but by charity [q]; and the life or essence of a thing is certainly the better part of its constitution, as the soul is to a man. And if we mark the manner of his probation, it will come home to the main point. For he proves, that "Abraham's faith was therefore imputed to him for righteousness, because he was justified by works; was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up his son? And the Scripture was

[n] Ex fide annunciantium Evangelium in fidem obedientium Evangelio. — *S. Aug.*

[o] Heb. xii. 2. [p] Heb. v. 1, 4. [q] Jam. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23, 26.

fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. For faith wrought with his works, and made his faith perfect." It was a dead and an imperfect faith, unless obedience gave it being, and all its integral or essential parts. So that faith and charity, in the sense of a Christian, are but one duty, as the understanding and the will are but one reasonable soul; only they produce several actions in order to one another, which are but "divers operations, and the same spirit."

9. Thus St. Paul, describing the faith of the Thessalonians, calls it that whereby they "turned from idols," and whereby they "served the living God[r];" and the faith of the patriarchs "believed the world's creation, received the promises, did miracles, wrought righteousness[s]," and did and suffered so many things as make up the integrity of a holy life. And therefore, disobedience and unrighteousness is called "want of faith[t];" and heresy, which is opposed to faith, is "a work of the flesh[u]," because faith itself is a work of righteousness. And, that I may enumerate no more particulars, the thing is so known, that the word ἀπείθεια[x], which, in propriety of language, signifies mispersuasion or infidelity, is rendered disobedience; and the "not providing for our families" is an act of infidelity, by the same reason and analogy that obedience, or charity, and a holy life, are the duties of a Christian, of a justifying faith. And although, in the natural or philosophical sense, faith and charity are distinct habits; yet, in the sense of a Christian, and the signification of duty, they are the same; for we cannot believe aright, as believing is in the commandment, unless we live aright; for our faith is put upon the account just as it is made precious by charity; according to that rare saying of St. Bartholomew, recorded by the supposed St. Denis, "Charity is the greatest and the least theology[y]:" all our faith, that is, all our religion, is completed in the duties of universal charity; as our charity or our manner of living is, so is our faith. If our life be unholy, it may be the faith

[r] 1 Thess. i. 8, 9.
[s] Heb. xi. per totum.
[t] Col. iii. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 2.
[u] Gal. v. 20.
[x] Eph. ii. 2, et v. 6. 1 Tim. v. 8.
[y] ἡ ἀγάπη θεολογία πολλὴ, καὶ ἐλαχίστη. c. 1. *de Myst. Theol.*

of devils, but not the faith of Christians. For this is the difference.

10. The faith of the devils hath more of the understanding in it, the faith of Christians more of the will: the devils in their faith have better discourse, the Christians better affections: they, in their faith, have better arguments, we more charity. So that charity or a good life is so necessary an ingredient into the definition of a Christian's faith, that we have nothing else to distinguish it from the faith of devils; and we need no trial of our faith, but the examination of our lives. If you "keep the commandments of God," then have you the faith of Jesus; they are immediate, in St. John's expression[z]: but if you be importune and ungodly, you are in St. Paul's list[a], amongst them that have no faith. Every vice, that rules amongst us, and sullies the fair beauty of our souls, is a conviction of infidelity.

11. For it was the faith of Moses that made him despise the riches of Egypt; the faith of Joshua, that made him valiant; the faith of Joseph, that made him chaste; Abraham's faith made him obedient; St. Mary Magdalen's faith made her penitent; and the faith of St. Paul made him travel so far, and suffer so much, till he became a prodigy, both of zeal and patience. Faith is a catholicon, and cures all the distemperatures of the soul; it "overcomes the world[b]," saith St. John; it "works righteousness[c]," saith St. Paul; it "purifies the heart[d]," saith St. Peter; "it works miracles," saith our blessed Saviour; miracles in grace always, as it did miracles in nature at its first publication: and whatsoever is good, if it be a grace, it is an act of faith; if it be a reward, it is the fruit of faith. So that as all the actions of man are but the productions of the soul, so are all the actions of the new man the effects of faith. For faith is the life of Christianity, and a good life is the life of faith.

12. Upon the grounds of this discourse, we may understand the sense of that question of our blessed Saviour: "When the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith on earth[e]?" Truly, just so much as he finds charity and holy living, and no more. For then only we can be confident, that

[z] Apoc. xiv. 12. [a] 2 Thess. iii. 2. [b] 1 John, v. 4.
[c] Heb. xi. 33. [d] Acts, xv. 9. [e] Luke, xviii. 8.

faith is not "failed from among the children of men," when we feel the heats of the primitive charity return, and the calentures of the first old devotion are renewed; when it shall be accounted honourable to be a servant of Christ, and a shame to commit a sin. Then, and then only, our churches shall be assemblies of the faithful, and the kingdoms of the world Christian countries. But so long as it is notorious, that we have made the Christian religion another thing than what the holy Jesus designed it to be; when it does not make us live good lives, but itself is made a pretence to all manner of impiety, a stratagem to serve ends, the ends of covetousness, of ambition, and revenge; when the Christian charity ends in killing one another for conscience sake, so that faith is made to cut the throat of charity, and our faith kills more than our charity preserves; when the humility of a Christian hath indeed a name amongst us, but it is like a mute person, talked of only; while ambition and rebellion, pride and scorn, self-seeking and proud undertakings, transact most of the great affairs of Christendom; when the custody of our senses is to no other purposes, but that no opportunity of pleasing them pass away; when our oaths are like the fringes of our discourses, going round about them, as if they were ornaments and trimmings; when our blasphemies, profanation, sacrilege, and irreligion, are become scandalous to the very Turks and Jews; while our lusts are always habitual, sometimes unnatural; will any wise man think that we believe those doctrines[f] of humility and obedience, of chastity and charity, of temperance and justice, which the Saviour of the world made sacred by his sermon and example; or, indeed, any thing he either said or did, promised or threatened? For is it possible, a man with his wits about him, and believing that he should certainly be damned, (that is, be eternally tormented, in body and soul, with torments greater than can be in this world;) if he be a swearer, or liar, or drunkard, or cheats his neighbour; that this man should dare to do these things, to which the temptations are so small, in which the delight is so inconsiderable, and the satisfaction so none at all?

[f] Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ μὴ τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν φάσκειν.—*S. Chrys. ad Demetr.*

13. We see, by the experience of the whole world, that the belief of an honest man, in a matter of temporal advantage, makes us do actions of such danger and difficulty, that half so much industry and sufferance would ascertain us into a possession of all the promises evangelical. Now, let any man be asked, whether he had rather be rich or be saved? he will tell you, without all doubt, heaven is the better option by infinite degrees: for it cannot be that riches, or revenge, or lust, should be directly preferred; that is, be thought more eligible than the glories of immortality. That, therefore, men neglect so great salvation, and so greedily run after the satisfaction of their baser appetites, can be attributed to nothing but want of faith; they do not heartily believe that heaven is worth so much; there is upon them a stupidity of spirit, and their faith is dull, and its actions suspended most commonly, and often interrupted, and it never enters into the will: so that the propositions are considered nakedly and precisely in themselves, but not as referring to us or our interests; there is nothing of faith in it, but so much as is the first and direct act of understanding; there is no consideration or reflection upon the act, or upon the person, or upon the subject. So that, even as it is seated in the understanding, our faith is commonly lame, mutilous, and imperfect; and therefore much more is it culpable, because it is destitute of all co-operation of the rational appetite.

14. But let us consider the power and efficacy of worldly belief. If a man believes, that there is gold to be had in Peru for fetching, or pearls and rich jewels in India for the exchange of trifles, he instantly, if he be in capacity, leaves the wife of his bosom, and the pretty delights of children, and his own security, and ventures into the dangers of waters and unknown seas, and freezings and calentures, thirst and hunger, pirates and shipwrecks; and hath within him a principle strong enough to answer all objections, because he believes that riches are desirable, and by such means likely to be had. Our blessed Saviour, comparing the Gospel to "a merchantman, that found a pearl of great price," and "sold all to buy it," hath brought this instance home to the present discourse. For if we did as verily believe, that in heaven those great felicities, which transcend all our apprehensions, are certainly to be obtained by leaving our vices and lower

desires, what can hinder us but we should at least do as much for obtaining those great felicities as for the lesser, if the belief were equal? For if any man thinks he may have them without holiness, and justice, and charity, then he wants faith; for he believes not the saying of St. Paul: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God[g]." If a man believes learning to be the only or chiefest ornament and beauty of souls, that which will ennoble him to a fair employment in his own time, and an honourable memory to succeeding ages; this if he believes heartily, it hath power to make him endure catarrhs, gouts, hypochondriacal passions, to read till his eyes almost fix in their orbs, to despise the pleasures of idleness, or tedious sports, and to undervalue whatsoever does not co-operate to the end of his faith, the desire of learning. Why is the Italian so abstemious in his drinkings, or the Helvetian so valiant in his fight, or so true to the prince that employs him, but that they believe it to be noble so to be? If they believed the same, and had the same honourable thoughts of other virtues, they also would be as national as these. For faith will do its proper work. And when the understanding is peremptorily and fully determined upon the persuasion of a proposition, if the will should then dissent, and choose the contrary, it were unnatural and monstrous, and possibly no man ever does so: for that men do things without reason, and against their conscience, is, because they have put out their light, and discourse their wills into the election of a sensible good, and want faith to believe truly all cirumstances, which are necessary by way of predisposition, for choice of the intellectual.

15. But when men's faith is confident, their resolution and actions are in proportion: for thus the faith of Mahometans makes them to abstain from wine for ever; and therefore, if we had the Christian faith, we should much rather abstain from drunkenness for ever; it being an express rule apostolical, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess[h]." The faith of the Circumcellians made them to run greedily to violent and horrid deaths, as willingly as to a crown; for they thought it was the king's highway to martyrdom. And

[g] Heb. xii. 14. [h] Ephes. v. 18.

there was never any man zealous for his religion, and of an imperious bold faith, but he was also willing to die for it: and therefore, also, by as much reason to live in it, and to be a strict observer of its prescriptions. And the stories of the strict sanctity, and prodigious sufferings, and severe disciplines, and expensive religion, and compliant and laborious charity, of the primitive Christians, is abundant argument to convince us, that the faith of Christians is infinitely more fruitful and productive of its univocal and proper issues, than the faith of heretics, or the false religions of misbelievers, or the persuasions of secular persons, or the spirit of antichrist. And therefore, when we see men serving their prince with such difficult and ambitious services, because they believe him able to reward them, though of his will they are not so certain, and yet so supinely negligent and incurious of their services to God, of whose power and will to reward us infinitely, there is certainty absolute and irrespective; it is certain probation that we believe it not: for if we believe there is such a thing as heaven, and that every single man's portion of heaven is far better than all the wealth in the world, it is morally impossible we should prefer so little before so great profit.

16. I instance but once more. The faith of Abraham was instanced in the matter of confidence or trust in the Divine promises; and, he being "the father of the faithful," we must imitate his faith by a clear dereliction of ourselves and our own interests, and an entire confident relying upon the Divine goodness, in all cases of our needs or danger. Now, this also is a trial of the verity of our faith, the excellence of our condition, and what title we have to the glorious names of Christians, and faithful, and believers. If our fathers, when we were in pupilage and minority, or a true and an able friend, when we were in need, had made promises to supply our necessities; our confidence was so great, that our care determined. It were also well that we were as confident of God, and as secure of the event, when we had disposed ourselves to reception of the blessing, as we were of our friend or parents. We all profess that God is almighty, that all his promises are certain, and yet, when it comes to a pinch, we find that man to be more confident, that hath ten thousand pounds in his purse, than he that reads God's pro-

mises over ten thousand times[i]. "Men of a common spirit," saith St. Chrysostom, "of an ordinary sanctity, will not steal, or kill, or lie, or commit adultery; but it requires a rare faith, and a sublimity of pious affections, to believe that God will work a deliverance, which to me seems impossible." And indeed St. Chrysostom hit upon the right. He had need be a good man, and love God well, that puts his trust in him. For those we love, we are most apt to trust[k]; and although trust and confidence is sometimes founded upon experience, yet it is also begotten and increased by love, as often as by reason and discourse. And to this purpose it was excellently said by St. Basil, "That the knowledge which one man learneth of another, is made perfect by continual use and exercise; but that which, through the grace of God, is engrafted in the mind of man, is made absolute by justice, gentleness, and charity." So that if you are willing, even in death, to confess not only the articles, but in affliction and death to trust the promises; if, in the lowest nakedness of poverty, you can cherish yourselves with the expectation of God's promises and dispensation, being as confident of food and raiment, and deliverance or support, when all is in God's hand, as you are when it is in your own; if you can be cheerful in a storm, smile when the world frowns, be content in the midst of spiritual desertions and anguish of spirit, expecting all should work together for the best, according to the promise; if you can strengthen yourselves in God when you are weakest, believe when you see no hope, and entertain no jealousies or suspicions of God, though you see nothing to make you confident; then, and then only, you have faith, which, in conjunction with its other parts, is able to save your souls. For in this precise duty of trusting God, there are the rays of hope, and great proportions of charity and resignation.

17. The sum is that pious and most Christian sentence of

[i] Clarè cognosceres non adeò esse facile Deo soli, re aliâ non assumptâ, credere, propter eam, quæ in nobis est, cum mortali compage cognationem. Ab his autem purgari omnibus —— uni autem Deo confidere, magni et cœlestis animi est opus, et ejus qui nullis ampliùs capiatur earum quas videmus rerum illecebris. — *Phil. Judæus, libr. Quis Rerum Div. Hæres.*

[k] Ἔστι γὰρ πᾶς τοῦτο τῇ τυραννίδι πάσημα, τοῖς φίλοισι μὴ πιστοῦσθαι.— *Æschyl. Promath.*

the author of the Ordinary Gloss. "To believe in God through Jesus Christ, is, by believing to love him, to adhere to him, to be united to him by charity and obedience, and to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body, in the communion of saints[l]." I conclude this with a collation of certain excellent words of St. Paul, highly to the present purpose: "Examine yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves[m]." Well, but how? "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" There is the touchstone of faith. If Jesus Christ dwells in us, then we are true believers; if he does not, we are reprobates, we have no faith. But how shall we know, whether Christ be in us or no? St. Paul tells us that too: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead, by reason of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness[n]." That is the Christian's mark, and the characteristic of a true believer; a death unto sin, and a living unto righteousness; a mortified body, and a quickened spirit. This is plain enough; and by this we see what we must trust to. A man of a wicked life does in vain hope to be saved by his faith; for indeed his faith is but equivocal and dead, which, as to his purpose, is just none at all; and therefore let him no more deceive himself. For, that I may still use the words of St. Paul, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works[o]." For such, and such only, in the great scrutiny for faith in the day of doom, shall have their portion in the bosom of faithful Abraham.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O eternal God, fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal; let thy grace descend with a mighty power into my soul, beating down every strong hold and vainer imagination, and bringing every proud thought, and

[l] Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire, et membris ejus incorporari.—*Gloss. Ord. in Rom.* 4.

[m] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [n] Rom. viii. 10. [o] Titus, iii. 8.

my confident and ignorant understanding, into the obedience of Jesus. Take from me all disobedience and refractoriness of spirit, all ambition, and private and baser interests; remove from me all prejudice and weakness of persuasion, that I may wholly resign my understanding to the persuasions of Christianity, acknowledging thee to be the principle of truth, and thy word the measure of knowledge, and thy laws the rule of my life, and thy promises the satisfaction of my hopes, and an union with thee to be the consummation of charity, in the fruition of glory. Amen.

II.

Holy Jesus, make me to acknowledge thee to be my Lord and Master, and myself a servant and disciple of thy holy discipline and institution; let me love to sit at thy feet, and suck in with my ears and heart the sweetness of thy holy sermons. Let my soul be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, with a peaceable and docile disposition. Give me great boldness in the public confession of thy name, and the truth of thy Gospel, in despite of all hostilities and temptations. And grant I may always remember, that thy name is called upon me, and I may so behave myself, that I neither give scandal to others, nor cause disreputation to the honour of religion; but that thou mayest be glorified in me, and I by thy mercies, after a strict observance of all the holy laws of Christianity. Amen.

III.

O holy and ever-blessed Spirit, let thy gracious influences be the perpetual guide of my rational faculties: inspire me with wisdom and knowledge, spiritual understanding, and a holy faith; and sanctify my faith, that it may arise up to the confidence of hope, and the adherences of charity, and be fruitful in a holy conversation. Mortify in me all peevishness and pride of spirit, all heretical dispositions, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine; that when the eternal Son of God, the "author and finisher of our faith," shall come to make scrutiny, and an inquest for faith, I may receive the promises laid up for them that

believe in the Lord Jesus, and wait for his coming in holiness and purity: to whom, with the Father, and thee, O blessed Spirit, be all honour and eternal adoration paid, with all sanctity, and joy, and eucharist, now and for ever. Amen.

SECTION XI.

Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover, the first time after his Manifestation, and what followed, till the Expiration of the Office of John the Baptist.

1. IMMEDIATELY after this miracle, Jesus abode a few days in Capernaum, but because of the approach of the great feast of passover, he ascended to Jerusalem; and the first public act of record that he did, was an act of holy zeal and religion in behalf of the honour of the temple. For divers merchants and exchangers of money made the temple to be the market and the bank, and brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice, against the great paschal solemnity. At the sight of which, Jesus, being moved with zeal and indignation, "made a whip of cords, and drave the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accounting tables, and commanded them that sold the doves, to take them from thence." For his anger was holy, and he would mingle no injury with it; and therefore the doves, which, if let loose, would be detrimental to the owners, he caused to be fairly removed; and published the religion of holy places, establishing their sacredness for ever, by his first Gospel-sermon that he made at Jerusalem. "Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of merchandise; for it shall be called a house of prayer to all nations." And being required to give a sign of his vocation, (for this, being an action like the religion of the zealots among the Jews, if it was not attested by something extraordinary, might be abused into an excess of liberty,) he only foretold the resurrection of his body after three days' death, but he expressed it in the metaphor of the temple: "Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days. He spake of the temple of his body;" and they

understood him of the temple at Jerusalem; and it was never rightly construed, till it was accomplished.

2. At this public convention of the Jewish nation, Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messias, and persuaded many disciples, amongst whom was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation: "he came by night to Jesus," and affirmed himself to be convinced by the miracles which he had seen; for "no man could do those miracles, except God be with him." When Jesus perceived his understanding to be so far disposed, he began to instruct him in the great secret and mysteriousness of regeneration, telling him "that every production is of the same nature and condition with its parent; from flesh comes flesh and corruption, from the Spirit comes spirit, and life, and immortality; and nothing from a principle of nature could arrive to a supernatural end; and therefore the only door to enter into the kingdom of God, was water, by the manuduction of the Spirit; and by this regeneration we are put into a new capacity, of living a spiritual life, in order to a spiritual and supernatural end."

3. This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus; but Jesus bade him not to wonder: for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's Spirit, and an issue of predestination. For 'the Spirit bloweth where it listeth,' and is, as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and in the manner of production. And, therefore, this doctrine was not to be estimated by any proportions to natural principles, or experiments of sense, but to the secrets of a new metaphysic, and abstracted, separate speculations. Then Christ proceeds in his sermon, telling him there are yet higher things for him to apprehend and believe; for this, in respect of some other mysteriousness of his Gospel, was but as earth, in comparison of heaven. Then he tells of his own descent from heaven, foretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption, which he came to work for mankind; he preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity; he upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of a holy and a corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, the confidence and serenity of the other." And this is the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest

of mystery and speculation, and abstracted senses, of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his passion; all his other sermons being more practical.

4. From Jerusalem, Jesus goeth into the country of Judæa, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to Christ, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There his disciples did receive all comers, and baptized them, as John at the same time did; and by that ceremony admitted them to the discipline and institution, according to the custom of the doctors and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars was the ceremony of their admission. As soon as John heard it, he acquitted himself in public, by renewing his former testimony concerning Jesus; affirming him "to be the Messias, and now the time was come that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution; for Christ came from above, was above all, and the sum of his doctrine was, that which he had heard and seen from the Father, whom God sent to that purpose, to whom God had set his seal, that he was true, who spake the words of God, whom the Father loved, to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all things; this was he, whose testimony the world received not." And that they might know, not only what person they slighted, but how great salvation also they neglected, he sums up all his sermons, and finishes his mission with this saying: "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him[a]."

5. For now that the Baptist had fulfilled his office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and bring him to his reward upon this occasion. John, who had so learned to despise the world, and all its exterior vanities and impertinent relations, did his duty justly, and so without respect of persons, that as he reproved the people for their prevarications, so he spared not Herod for his; but abstaining from all expresses of the spirit of scorn and asperity, mingling no discontents, interests, nor mutinous intimations with his sermons, he told Herod, "it was not

[a] John, iii. 36.

lawful for him to have his brother's wife[b]." For which sermon he felt the furies and malice of a woman's spleen, was cast into prison, and about a year after was sacrificed to the scorn and pride of a lustful woman, and her immodest daughter; being, at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching, beheaded by Herod's command, who would not retract his promise, because of his honour, and a rash vow he made in the gaiety of his lust, and complacencies of his riotous dancings. His head was brought up in a dish, and made a festival-present to the young girl, who gave it to her mother: a cruelty that was not known among the barbarisms of the worst of people, to mingle banquetings with blood and sights of death; an insolence and inhumanity, for which the Roman orators accused Q. Flaminius of treason, because, to satisfy the wanton cruelty of Placentia, he caused a condemned slave to be killed at supper; and which had no precedent but in the furies of Marius, who caused the head of the consul Antonius to be brought up to him in his feasts, which he handled with much pleasure and insolence[c].

6. But God's judgments, which sleep not long[d], found out Herod, and marked him for a curse. For the wife of Herod, who was the daughter of Aretas, a king of Arabia Petræa, being repudiated by paction with Herodias, provoked her father to commence a war with Herod; who prevailed against Herod in a great battle, defeating his whole army, and forcing him to an inglorious flight: which the Jews generally expounded to be a judgment on him, for the unworthy

[b] Montanistæ, et cum his Tertul. adv. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 34, aiunt Philippum defunctum fuisse, et indè probare satagunt secundas nuptias illicitas esse. Sed hoc tam apertâ fraude, ut agens adv. Catholicos Tertullianus abstineat abs tam iniquâ recitatione. Marcionì autem Evangelium negantì hoc obtrudere in facili erat.

[c] Senec. cont. lib. v. Livius, lib. xxxix. Plut. in Mario.

[d] Ὅστις δὲ θνητῶν μίμφεται τὰ θεῖ', ὅτι
Οἱοι ἰυδὺς, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ μετέρχεται
Τοὺς μὴ δικαίους, πρόφασιν ἐξαναυσάτω.
Εἰ γὰρ παραυτίκ' ἦσαν αἱ τιμωρίαι,
Πολλοὶ διὰ φόβον, κοὐ δι' ἐυσεβῆ τρόπον,
Θεὸν σέβοιντ' ἂν· νῦν δὲ τῆς τιμωρίας
Ἀπωθὲν οὔσης, τῇ φύσει χρῶνται βροτοί.
Ὅταν δὲ φωραθῶσιν, ὀφθέντες κακοὶ
Τίνουσι ποιναὶς ὑστέροισιν ἐν χρόνοις.

Theodect. Grot. Stob. p. 123.

and barbarous execution and murder of John the Baptist; God, in his wisdom and severity, making one sin to be the punishment of another, and neither of them both to pass without the signature of a curse. And Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodias, passing over a frozen lake, the ice brake, and she fell up to the neck in water, and her head was parted from her body, by the violence of the fragments, shaken by the water and its own fall, and so perished; God having fitted a judgment to the analogy and representment of her sin. Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramour, Herod, were banished to Lyons, in France, by decree of the Roman senate[e], where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably; so paying dearly for her triumphal scorn, superadded to her crime of murder: for when she saw the head of the Baptist, which her daughter, Salome, had presented to her in a charger, she thrust the tongue through with a needle, as Fulvia had formerly done to Cicero. But herself paid the charges of her triumph.

SECTION XI.

Considerations upon the first Journey of the Holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the Merchants out of the Temple.

1. When the feast came, and Jesus was ascended up to Jerusalem, the first place we find him in is the temple; where not only was the area and court of religion, but, by occasion of public conventions, the most opportune scene for transaction of his commission and his Father's business. And those Christians who have been religious and affectionate, even in the circumstances of piety, have taken this for precedent, and accounted it a good express of the regularity of their devotion, and order of piety, at their first arrival to a city, to pay their first visits to God, the next to his servant, the president of religious rites. First, they went into the church, and worshipped; then to the angel of the church, to

[e] Jos. Ant. lib. xviii. c. 7. lib. i. Hist. c. 90.

the bishop, and begged his blessing: and having thus commenced with the auspiciousness of religion, they had better hopes their just affairs would succeed prosperously, which, after the rites of Christian countries, had thus been begun with devotion and religious order.

2. When the holy Jesus entered the temple, and espied a mart kept in the holy sept, a fair upon holy ground, he, who suffered no transportations of anger in matters and accidents temporal, was borne high with an ecstacy of zeal, and, according to the custom of the zealots of the nation, took upon him the office of a private infliction of punishment in the cause of God, which ought to be dearer to every single person than their own interest and reputation. What the exterminating angel did to Heliodorus, who came into the temple upon design of sacrilege, that the meekest Jesus did to them who came with acts of profanation; he whipped them forth. And as usually good laws spring from ill manners, and excellent sermons are occasioned by men's iniquities; now also our great Master, upon this accident, asserted the sacredness of holy places, in the words of a prophet, which now he made a lesson evangelical: "My house shall be called a house of prayer to all nations."

3. The beasts and birds there sold, were brought for sacrifice; and the banks of money were for the advantage of the people that came from far, that their returns might be safe and easy, when they came to Jerusalem upon the employments of religion. But they were not yet fit for the temple; they who brought them thither, purposed their own gain, and meant to pass them through an unholy usage, before they could be made "anathemata," vows to God: and when religion is but the purpose at the second hand, it cannot hallow a lay design, and make it fit to become a religious ministry, much less sanctify an unlawful action. When Rachel stole her father's gods, though possibly she might do it in zeal against her father's superstition, yet it was occasion of a sad accident to herself. For the Jews say, that Rachel died in child-birth of her second son, because of that imprecation of Jacob, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live[a]." Saul pretended sacrifice, when he spared the fat

[a] Gen. xxxi. 32.

cattle of Amalek; and Micah was zealous when he made him an ephod and a teraphim, and meant to make himself an image for religion when he stole his mother's money: but these are colours of religion, in which not only the world, but ourselves also, are deceived by a latent purpose, which we are willing to cover with a remote design of religion, lest it should appear unhandsome in its own dressing. Thus some believe a covetousness allowable, if they greedily heap treasure, with a purpose to build hospitals or colleges; and sinister acts of acquiring church-livings are not so soon condemned, if the design be to prefer an able person; and actions of revenge come near to piety, if it be to the ruin of an ungodly man; and indirect proceedings are made sacred, if they be for the good of the holy cause. This is profaning the temple with beasts brought for sacrifices, and dishonours God by making himself accessary to his own dishonour, as far as lies in them; for it disserves him with a pretence of religion: and, but that our hearts are deceitful, we should easily perceive that the greatest business of the letter is written in postscript; the great pretence is the least purpose; and the latent covetousness or revenge, or the secular appendix, is the main engine to which the end of religion is made but instrumental and pretended. But men, when they sell a mule, use to speak of the horse that begat him, not of the ass that bore him.

4. The holy Jesus "made a whip of cords," to represent and to chastise the implications and enfoldings of sin, and the cords of vanity. 1. There are some sins that of themselves are a whip of cords: those are the crying sins, that, by their degree and malignity, speak loud for vengeance; or such as have great disreputation, and are accounted the basest issues of a caitive disposition; or such which are unnatural and unusual; or which, by public observation, are marked with the signature of Divine judgments. Such are murder, oppression of widows and orphans, detaining the labourer's hire, lusts against nature, parricide, treason, betraying a just trust in great instances and base manners, lying to a king, perjury in a priest: these carry Cain's mark upon them, or Judas' sting, or Manasses' sorrow, unless they be made impudent by the spirit of obduration. 2. But there are some sins that bear shame upon them, and are used

as correctives of pride and vanity; and if they do their cure, they are converted into instruments of good by the great power of the Divine grace: but if the spirit of the man grows impudent and hardened against the shame, that which commonly follows is the worst string of the whip, a direct consignation to a reprobate spirit. 3. Other sins there are, for the chastising of which Christ takes the whip into his own hand; and there is much need; when sins are the customs of a nation, and marked with no exterior disadvantage, or have such circumstances of encouragement that they are unapt to disquiet a conscience, or make our beds uneasy, till the pillows be softened with penitential showers. In both these cases, the condition of a sinner is sad and miserable. For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" his hand is heavy, and his sword is sharp, and "pierces to the dividing the marrow and the bones:" and he that considers the infinite distance between God and us, must tremble, when he remembers that he is to feel the issues of that anger, which he is not certain whether or no it will destroy him infinitely and eternally. 4. But if the whip be given into our hands, that we become executioners of the Divine wrath, it is sometimes worse; for we seldom strike ourselves for emendation, but add sin to sin, till we perish miserably and inevitably. God scourges us often into repentance; but when a sin is the whip of another sin, the rod is put into our hands, who, like blind men, strike with a rude and undiscerning hand, and, because we love the punishment, do it without intermission or choice, and have no end but ruin.

5. When the holy Jesus had whipped the merchants in the temple, they took away all the instruments of their sin. For a judgment is usually the commencement of repentance: love is the last of graces, and seldom at the beginning of a new life, but is reserved to the perfections and ripeness of a Christian. We begin in fear: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: when he smote them, then they turned, and inquired early after God[b]." And afterwards the impresses of fear continue like a hedge of thorns about us, to restrain our dissolutions within the awfulness of the Divine

[b] Psalm lxxviii. 34.

majesty, that it may preserve what was from the same principle begun. This principle of their emendation was from God, and therefore innocent and holy; and the very purpose of Divine threatenings is, that upon them, as upon one of the great hinges, the piety of the greatest part of men should turn: and the effect was answerable; but so are not the actions of all those, who follow this precedent in the tract of the letter. For indeed there have been some reformations, which have been so like this, that the greatest alteration which hath been made, was, that they carried all things out of the temple, the money, and the tables, and the sacrifice; and the temple itself went at last. But these men's scourge is to follow after; and Christ, the Prince of the catholic church, will provide one of his own contexture, more severe than the stripes which Heliodorus felt from the infliction of the exterminating angel. But the Holy Spirit of God, by making provision against such a reformation, hath prophetically declared the aptnesses which are in pretences of religious alterations to degenerate into sacrilegious desires: "Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege[c]?" In this case there is no amendment; only one sin resigns to another, and the person still remains under its power and the same dominion.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, thou bright image of thy Father's glories, whose light did shine to all the world, when thy heart was inflamed with zeal and love of God and of religion, let a coal from thine altar, fanned with the wings of the holy Dove, kindle in my soul such holy flames, that I may be zealous of thy honour and glory, forward in religious duties, earnest in their pursuit, prudent in their managing, ingenuous in my purposes, making my religion to serve no end but of thy glories, and the obtaining of thy promises: and so sanctify my soul and my body, that I may be a holy temple, fit and prepared for the inhabitation of thy ever-blessed Spirit, whom grant that I may never grieve by admitting any impure thing to desecrate the place, and

[c] Rom. ii. 22.

unhallow the courts of his abode; but give me a pure soul in a chaste and healthful body, a spirit full of holy simplicity, and designs of great ingenuity, and perfect religion, that I may intend what thou commandest, and may with proper instruments prosecute what I so intend, and by thy aids may obtain the end of my labours, the rewards of obedience and holy living, even the society and inheritance of Jesus, in the participation of the joys of thy temple, where thou dwellest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, O eternal Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of the Religion of Holy Places.

1. THE holy Jesus brought a Divine warrant for his zeal. The selling sacrifices, and the exchange of money, and every lay employment, did violence and dishonour to the temple, which was hallowed to ecclesiastical ministries, and set apart for offices of religion, for the use of holy things; for it was God's house: and so is every house by public designation separate for prayer or other uses of religion; it is God's house. "My house." God had a propriety in it, and had set his mark on it, even his own name. And therefore it was, in the Jews' idiom of speech, called "the mountain of the Lord's house," and "the house of the Lord" by David frequently: God had put his name into all places appointed for solemn worship: "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and bless thee[a]." For God, who was never visible to mortal eye, was pleased to make himself presential by substitution of his name; that is, in certain places he hath appointed that his name shall be called upon, and, by promising and imparting such blessings, which he hath made consequent to the invocation of his name, hath made such places to be a certain determination of some special manner of his presence. For God's name is not a distinct thing from himself, not an idea, and it cannot be put

[a] Exod. xx. 24.

into a place in literal signification; the expression is to be resolved into some other sense: God's name is that whereby he is known, by which he is invocated, that which is the most immediate publication of his essence, nearer than which we cannot go unto him: and because God is essentially present in all places, when he makes himself present in one place more than another, it cannot be understood to any other purpose, but that in such places he gives special blessings and graces, or that in those places he appoints his name, that is, himself, specially to be invocated.

2. So that, when God "puts his name" in any place by a special manner, it signifies that there himself is in that manner: but, in separate and hallowed places, God hath expressed that he puts his name with a purpose it should be called upon; therefore, in plain signification, it is thus: In consecrated places God himself is present to be invoked; that is, there he is most delighted to hear the prayers we make unto him. For all the expressions of Scripture, of "God's house, the tabernacle of God, God's dwellings, putting his name there, his sanctuary," are resolved into that saying of God to Solomon, who prayed that he would hear the prayers of necessitous people in that place: God granting the request, expressed it thus, "I have sanctified the house which thou hast built[b]:" that is, the house which thou hast designed for my worship, I have designed for your blessing; what you have dedicated, I have accepted; what you have consecrated, I have hallowed; I have taken it to the same purpose to which your desires and designation pretended it in your first purposes and expense. So that, since the purpose of man, in separating places of worship, is, that thither, by order and with convenience, and in communities of men, God may be worshipped and prayed unto, God having declared that he accepts of such separate places to the same purposes, says, that there he will be called upon, that such places shall be places of advantage to our devotions in respect of human order, and Divine acceptance and benediction.

3. Now these are therefore God's houses, because they were given by men, and accepted by God, for the service of

[b] 1 Kings, ix. 3.

God and the offices of religion. And this is not the effect or result of any distinct covenant God hath made with man, in any period of the world; but it is merely a favour of God, either hearing the prayer of dedication, or complying with human order or necessities. For there is nothing in the covenant of Moses' law, that, by virtue of special stipulation, makes the assignment of a house for the service of God to be proper to Moses' rite. Not only because God had memorials and determinations of this manner of his presence before Moses' law, as at Bethel, where Jacob laid the first stone of the church, (nothing but a stone[c] was God's memorial,) and the beginning and first rudiments of a temple; but also because after Moses' law was given, as long as the nation was ambulatory, so were their places and instruments of religion: and although the ark was not confined to a place till Solomon's time, yet God was pleased in this manner to confine himself to the ark; and in all places, wherever his name was put, even in synagogues, and oratories, and threshing-floors, when they were hallowed with an altar and religion, thither God came, that is, there he heard them pray, and answered and blessed accordingly, still in proportion to that degree of religion which was put upon them. And those places, when they had once entertained religion, grew separate and sacred for ever. For therefore David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, that it might never return to common use any more: for it had been no trouble or inconvenience to Araunah to have used his floor for one solemnity; but he offered to give it, and David resolved to buy it, because it must, of necessity, be aliened from common uses, to which it could never return any more when once it had been the instrument of a religious solemnity: and yet this was no part of Moses' law, that every place of a temporary sacrifice should be "holy for ever." David had no guide in this but right reason, and the religion of all the world. For such things which were great instruments of public ends, and things of highest use, were also, in all societies of men, of greatest honour, and immured by reverence and the security

[c] Nec fortuitum spernere cespitem
Leges sinebant, oppida publico
Sumptu jubentes, et deorum
Templa novo decorare saxo.—*Hor.* lib. ii. od. 15.

of laws. For honour and reputation is not a thing inherent in any creature, but depends upon the estimate of God or men, who, either in diffusion or representation, become fountains of a derivative honour. Thus some men are honourable; that is, those who are fountains of honour in civil account have commanded that they shall be honoured. And so places and things are made honourable, that as honourable persons are to be distinguished from others by honourable usages and circumstances proper to them, so also should places and things (upon special reason separate) have an usage proper to them, when, by a public instrument or minister, they are so separated. No common usage then; something proper to tell what they are, and to what purposes they are designed, and to signify their separation and extraordinariness. Such are the person of the prince, the archives and records of a kingdom, the walls and great defences of the imperial city, the eagles and ensigns of war amongst the Romans; and, above all things, though not above all persons, the temples and altars, and all the instruments of religion. And there is much reason in it. For thus a servant of a king, though his employment be naturally mean, yet is more honourable, because he relates to the most excellent person: and therefore much more those things which relate to God. And though this be the reason why it should be so; yet, for this and other reasons, they that have power, that is, they who are acknowledged to be the fountains and the channels of honour, I mean the supreme power, and public fame, have made it actually to be so. For whatsoever all wise men, and all good men, and all public societies, and all supreme authority, hath commanded to be honoured or revered, that is honourable and reverend; and this honour and reverence is to be expressed according to the customs of the nation, and instruments of honour proper to the nature of the thing or person respectively. Whatsoever is esteemed so, is so; because honour and noble separations are relative actions and terms, creatures and productions of fame, and the voice of princes, and the sense of people: and they who will not honour those things or those persons, which are thus decreed to be honourable, have no communications with the civilities of humanity, or the guises of wise nations; they do not "give honour to whom honour belongs." Now that which in civil account

we call "honourable," the same in religious account we call "sacred:" for by both these words we mean things or persons made separate and retired from common opinion and vulgar usages, by reason of some excellency really inherent in them, (such as are excellent men;) or for their relation to excellent persons, or great ends, public or religious[d], (and so servants of princes, and ministers of religion, and its instruments and utensils, are made honourable or sacred:) and the expressions of their honour are all those actions and usages which are contrary to despite, and above the usage of vulgar things or places[e]. Whatsoever is sacred, that is honourable for its religious relation; and whatsoever is honourable, that also is sacred (that is, separate from the vulgar usages and account) for its civil excellency or relation. The result is this: that when public authority, or the consent of a nation[f], hath made any place sacred for the uses of religion, we must esteem it sacred, just as we esteem persons honourable who are so honoured. And thus are judges, and the very places of judicature, the king's presence-chamber, the chair of state, the senate-house, the royal ensigns of a prince, whose gold and purple, in its natural capacity, hath in it no more dignity than the money of the bank, or the cloth of the mart; but it hath much more for its signification and relative use. And it is certain, these things, whose excellency depends upon their relation, must receive the degree of their honour in that proportion they have to their term and foundation: and therefore what belongs to God (as holy places of religion) must rise highest in this account; I mean higher than any other places. And this is besides the honour which God hath put upon them by his presence and his title to them, which, in all religions, he hath signified to us.

4. Indeed, among the Jews, as God had confined his church, and the rites of religion, to be used only in communion and participation with the nation, so also he had limited his presence, and was more sparing of it than in the

[d] Religiosum est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum à nobis est; verbum à *relinquendo* dictum, tanquam *cæremonia* à *cærendo*.—*Gel.* lib. iv. c. 9.

[e] Cæremoniæ deorum, sanctitas regum.—*Jul Cæsar apud Sueton.*

[f] Ex lege cujusque civitatis jubentur dii coli. Dictum 5 Sapient. apud Xenophon. Σπένδειν δὲ καὶ θύειν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἑκάστους εὐσεβὲς.—*Epict.* c. 38.

time of the Gospel his Son declared he would be. "It was said of old, that at Jerusalem men ought to worship," that is, by a solemn, public, and great address in the capital expresses of religion, in the distinguishing rites of liturgy; for else it had been no new thing. For, in ordinary prayers, God was then, and long before, pleased to hear Jeremiah in the dungeon, Manasses in prison, Daniel in the lion's den, Jonas in the belly of the deep, and in the offices yet more solemn in the proseuchæ, in the houses of prayer which the Jews had, not only in their dispersion, but even in Palestine, for their diurnal and nocturnal offices. But when the holy Jesus had "broken down the partition-wall," then the most solemn offices of religion were as unlimited as their private devotions were before; for wherever a temple should be built, thither God would come, if he were "worshipped spiritually and in truth;" that is, according to the rites of Christ, (who is "grace and truth,") and the dictate of the Spirit, and analogy of the Gospel. All places were now alike to build churches in, or memorials for God, God's houses. And that our blessed Saviour discourses of places of public worship to the woman of Samaria, is notorious, because the whole question was concerning the great addresses of Moses' rites, whether at Jerusalem or mount Gerizim, which were the places of the right and the schismatical temple, the confinements of the whole religion: and in antithesis Jesus said, "Nor here nor there shall be the solemnities of address to God, but in all places you may build a temple, and God will dwell in it."

5. And this hath descended from the first beginnings of religion down to the consummation of it in the perfections of the Gospel. For the apostles of our Lord carried the offices of the Gospel into the temple of Jerusalem; there they preached and prayed, and paid vows, but never, that we read of, offered sacrifice: which shows, that the offices purely evangelical were proper to be done in any of God's proper places, and that thither they went not in compliance with Moses' rites, but merely for Gospel duties, or for such offices which were common to Moses and Christ, such as were prayers and vows. While the temple was yet standing, they had peculiar places for the assemblies of the faithful, where either by accident, or observation, or religion, or choice, they met regularly. And I instance, in the house

of John, surnamed Mark, which, as Alexander reports in the life of St. Barnabas, was consecrated by many actions of religion, by our blessed Saviour's eating the passover, his institution of the holy eucharist, his farewell-sermon; and the apostles met there in the octaves of Easter, whither Christ came again, and hallowed it with his presence; and there, to make up the relative sanctification complete, the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in "the feast of Pentecost:" and this was erected into a fair fabric, and is mentioned as a famous church by St. Jerome[g] and V. Bede; in which, as Adrichomius adds, St. Peter preached that sermon which was miraculously prosperous in the conversion of three thousand; there St. James, brother of our Lord, was consecrated first bishop of Jerusalem; St. Stephen, and the other six, were there ordained deacons; there the apostles kept their first council, and compiled their creed: by these actions, and their frequent conventions, showing the same reason, order, and prudence of religion, in assignation of special places of Divine service, which were ever observed by all the nations, and religions, and wise men of the world. And it were a strange imagination to fancy, that, in Christian religion, there is any principle contrary to that wisdom of God and all the world[h], which, for order, for necessity, for convenience, for the solemnity of worship, hath set apart places for God and for religion. Private prayer had always an unlimited residence and relation, even under Moses' law; but the public solemn prayer of sacrifice in the law of Moses was restrained to one temple: in the law of nature it was not confined to one, but yet determined to public and solemn places; and when the holy Jesus disparked the enclosures of Moses, we all returned to the permissions and liberty of the natural law, in which, although the public and solemn prayers were confined to a temple, yet the temple was not confined to a place; but they might be any where, so they were at all; instruments of order, conveniences of assembling, residences of religion: and God, who always loved order, and was apt to hear all holy and prudent prayers, (and therefore also the prayers of consecration,) hath often de-

[g] Epist. 27. De Locis Sanct. c. 3. In Descript. Hieros. n. 6.

[h] Φήμη δ' οὔτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται ἥντινα πολλοὶ Λαοὶ φημίζουσι.—*Hesiod.*

clared that he loves such places, that he will dwell in them; not that they are advantages to him, but that he is pleased to make them so to us. And therefore all nations of the world built public houses for religion; and, since all ages of the church did so too[1], it had need be a strong and a convincing argument that must show they were deceived. And "if any man list to be contentious," he must be answered with St. Paul's reproof, "We have no such custom, nor the churches of God."

6. Thus St. Paul reproved the Corinthians for "despising the church of God[k]" by such uses, which were therefore unfit for God's, because they were proper for their own, that is, for common houses. And although they were at first, and in the descending ages, so afflicted by the tyranny of enemies, that they could not build many churches; yet some they did, and the churches themselves suffered part of the persecution. For so Eusebius reports, that when, under Severus and Gordianus, Philip and Galienus, the Christian affairs were in a tolerable condition, they built churches in great number and expense. But when the persecution waxed hot under Diocletian, down went the churches, upon a design to extinguish or disadvantage the religion. Maximinus gave leave to rebuild them. Upon which rescript (saith the story) the Christians were overjoyed, and raised them up to an incredible height and incomparable beauty[l]. This was Christian religion then, and so it hath continued ever since; and, unless we should have new reason and new revelation, it must continue so till our churches are exchanged for thrones, and our chapels for seats placed before the Lamb in the eternal temple of celestial Jerusalem.

7. And to this purpose it is observed, that the holy Jesus first ejected the beasts of sacrifice out of the temple, and then proclaimed the place holy, and the scene of representing

[1] Omnes ad orandum in idem loci convenite: sit una communis precatio, una mens, una spes in charitate et fide inculpata in Christum Jesum; quo nihil est præstantius. Omnes velut unus quispiam ad templum Dei concurrite, velut ad unum altare, ad unum Jesum Christum, &c.—*S. Ignat. ad Magnes.*

[k] 1 Cor. xi. 22.

[l] Καὶ δὴ διήλθομεν σιδηρᾶς τε πύλας καὶ χαλκοῦς οὐδούς. Ἀναβάθρας δὲ πλείστας περιπλησάμενοι, ἐς χρυσόροφον εἶχον ἀνήλθομεν, οἷον Ὅμηρος τὸν Μενελάου φησί.—*Lucian. Philopat. de Templo Christiano.*

prayers, which in type intimates the same thing which is involved in the expression of the next words, "My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations;" now and for ever, to the Jews and to the Gentiles, in all circumstances and variety of time and nation, God's houses are holy in order to holy uses; the time as unlimited as the nations were indefinite and universal[m]. Which is the more observable, because it was of the outward courts, not whither Moses' rites alone were admitted, but the natural devotion of Jews and Gentile proselytes, that Christ affirmed it to be holy, to be the house of God, and the place of prayer. So that the religion of public places of prayer is not a rite of Levi, but a natural and prudent circumstance, and advantage of religion, in which all wise men agree, who therefore must have some common principle, with influence upon all the world, which must be the univocal cause of the consent of all men: which common principle must either be a dictate of natural or prime reason, or else some tradition from the first parents of mankind; which, because it had order in it, beauty, religion, and confirmation from Heaven, and no reason to contest against it, it hath surprised the understanding and practices of all nations. And indeed we find, that, even in Paradise, God had that which is analogical to a church, a distinct place where he manifested himself present in proper manner: for Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord;" and this was the word in all descent of the church, for the being of God in holy places, "the presence of the Lord was there." And probably, when Adam, from this intimation, or a greater direction, had taught Cain and Abel to offer sacrifice to God in a certain place, where they were observed of each in their several offerings, it became one of the rules of religion which was derived to their posterity by tradition, the only way they had to communicate the dictates of Divine commandment.

8. There is no more necessary to be added in behalf of holy places, and to assert them into the family and relatives

[m] Quod ab omnibus gentibus observatum est, id non nisi à Deo sancitum est.—*Socrates.*

Χρὴν πανταχοῦ ἴδιος γίνους καὶ θρησκείας ἰσχυρότερον.—*Nicet.*

Τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέστατα τούτους οἰκεῖν, οἳ ἂν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἴδιοι καὶ νόμοις, ἂν καὶ χεῖρω ᾖ, ἥκιστα διαφόρως πολιτεύσει.—*Alcibiad. apud Thucyd.* lib. vi.

of religion; our estimate and deportment towards them is matter of practice, and therefore of proper consideration. To which purpose I consider, that holy places being the residence of God's name upon earth, there where he hath put it, that, by fiction of law, it may be the sanctuary[n] and the last resort in all calamities and need, God hath sent his agents to possess them in person for him. Churches and oratories are regions and courts of angels, and they are there not only to minister to the saints, but also they possess them in the right of God. There they are: so the greatest and Prince of Spirits tells us, the Holy Ghost; "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and his train filled the temple[o]; above it stood the seraphim;" that was God's train, and therefore holy David knew that his addresses to God were in the presence of angels: "I will praise thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I sing praise unto thee[p]:" before the angels[q], so it is in the Septuagint. And that we might know where or how the kingly worshipper would pay this adoration, he adds, "I will worship towards thy holy temple." And this was so known by him, that it became expressive of God's manner of presence in heaven: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place[r];" God in the midst of angels, and the angels in the midst of "the holy place;" and God in heaven in the midst of that holy circle, as sure as he is amongst angels in the recesses of his sanctuary. Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels? and are the memorials of the Gospel destitute of so brave a retinue? Did the beatified spirits wait upon the types? and do they decline the office at the ministration of the substance? Is the nature of man made worse since the incarnation of the Son of God? and have the angels purchased an exemption from their ministry since Christ became our brother? We have little reason to think so: and therefore St. Paul still makes use of the argument to press women to modesty and humility in churches, "because of the angels."

[n] Psalm xxvii. 4, 5, 6. [o] Isaiah, vi. 1. [p] Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.

[q] Ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων, LXX. Μαρτύρομαι δὲ ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῶν τὰ ἅγια, καὶ τοὺς ἱεροὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ Θεοῦ.—*Orat. Agrip. apud Joseph.* lib. ii. c. 16. *de Bello Judaïc.*

[r] Psalm lxviii. 17.

And upon the same stock St. Chrysostom[a] chides the people of his diocese for walking, and laughing, and prating in churches: "The church is not a shop of manufactures or merchandise; but the place of angels and of archangels, the court of God, and the image or representment of heaven itself."

9. For if we consider that Christianity is something more than ordinary, that there are mysteries in our religion, and in none else, that God's "angels are ministering spirits for our good," and especially about the conveyances of our prayers; either we must think very low of Christianity, or that greater things are in it than the presence of angels in our churches: and yet if there were no more, we should do well to behave ourselves there with the thoughts and apprehensions of Heaven about us; always remembering, that our business there is an errand of religion, and God is the object of our worshippings; and therefore, although by our weakness we are fixed in the lowness of men, yet because God's infinity is our object, it were very happy if our actions did bear some few degrees of a proportionable and commensurate address.

10. Now that the angels are there in the right of God, and are a manner and an exhibition of the Divine presence, is therefore certain, because, whenever it is said in the Old Testament that God appeared, it was by an angel; and the law itself, in the midst of all the glorious terrors of its manifestation, "was ordained by angels," and "a word spoken by angels;" and yet God is said to have descended upon the mount: and in the greatest glory that ever shall be revealed till the consummation of all things, the instrument of the Divine splendour is the apparition of angels; for when the holy Jesus "shall come in the glory of his Father," it is added, by way of explication, that is, "with an host of angels."

11. The result is those words of God to his people, "Re-

[a] Τότε καὶ ἄγγελοι παρεστήκασι τῷ ἱερεῖ, &c. — *Homil.* 16. *in* 1 *Cor. et de Sacerd.*

Non dubites assistere angelum quando Christus assistit, Christus immolatur. — *S. Ambros. in* cap. i. *Lucæ.*

Angeli siquidem circumfusi sacra custodiunt, et divinâ freti potentiâ sacerdoti subserviunt. — *R. Canutus in Leg. Ecc.* c. 4.

verence my sanctuary[t]. For what God loves in an especial manner, it is most fit we should esteem accordingly. "God loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob[u]." The least turf of hallowed glebe is, with God himself, of more value than all the champaign of common possession; it is better in all senses: "The temple is better than gold," said our blessed Saviour[x]; and therefore it were well we should do that which is expressed in the command, of giving reverence to it, for we are too apt to pay undue devotions to gold. Which precept the holiest of that nation expressed by worshipping towards the sanctuary, by pulling off their shoes when they went into it[y], by making it the determination of their religious addresses, by falling down low upon the earth in their accesses, by opening their windows towards it in their private devotions, by calling it the glory of their nation: as is certain in the instances of David, Daniel, and the wife of Phinehas. I shall not need to say, that the devouter Christians, in the first ages, did worship God with solemnities of address whenever they entered into their oratories. It was a civility Jesus commanded his disciples to use to common houses, "When ye enter into a house, salute it:" I suppose he means the dwellers in it. And it is certain, whatever those devouter people did in their religious approaches, they designed it to God, who was the major-domo, the master of those assemblies: and thus did the convinced Christian in St. Paul's discourse, when he came into the church where they were prophesying in a known language; "The secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God[z]."

12. It was no unhandsome expression of reverencing God's sanctuary, that pious people ever used in bestowing costly and fair ornaments upon it: for so all the Christians

[t] Lev. xix. 30. [u] Psalm lxxxvii. 2. [x] Matt. xxiii. 17.

[y] Ἀνυποδήτους θύειν καὶ προσκυνεῖν, dixit Pythagoras. Maimonides ait nefas fuisse Judæis calceatis ingredi sanctuarium, aut vestitis vestibus opificum. Justin. Martyr. ait gentes in sacris ἀνυπόδητοι.

Intramus templa compositi, ad sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, in omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur. — *Sen.*

Extemplò illò te ducam ubi non despuas. — *Nævius in Triphallo.*

Quo ore Thurarius Christianus, si per templa transibit, fumantes aras despuet? — *Tert. de Idol.* c. 1. *Con. Gang.* c. 5.

[z] 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

did; as soon as themselves came from contempt and scorn, they raised Christian oratories to an equal portion of their honour; and by this way they thought they did honour to God, who was the Numen of the place. Not that a rich house, or costly offertory, is better in respect of God[a]; for to him all is alike, save that, in equal abilities, our devotion is distinguished by them; and be the offering never so contemptible, it is a rich devotion that gives the best we have: because, although, if all the wealth of the Levant were united into a present, it were short of God's infinity; yet such an offertory, or any best we have, makes demonstration, that if we had an offering infinitely better, we should give it, to express our love and our belief of God's infinite merit and perfection. And, therefore, let not "the widow's two mites" become a precedent to the instance and value of our donation; and because she, who gave no more, was accepted, think that two farthings is as fit to be cast into the corban as two thousand pounds. For the reason why our blessed Saviour commended the widow's oblation was for the greatness of it, not the smallness; "she gave all she had, even all her living;" therefore she was accepted. And indeed, since God gives to us more than enough, beyond our necessities, much for our conveniency, much for ease, much for repute, much for public compliances, for variety, for content, for pleasure, for ornament; we should deal unworthily with God Almighty, if we limit and restrain our returns to him, by confining them within the narrow bounds of mere necessity. Certainly beggarly services and cheapness is not more pleasing to God than a rich and magnificent address[b]. To the best of essences, the best

[a] Πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἑκατόμβας θύσαντα μὴ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς γνώμης, καὶ πυθανόμενον πῶς εἴη προσδεδεγμένος τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ δῶρα, ἀκριβῶται [Πύθιος,] Ἀλλά μοι ἴναδε χόνδρος ἀγακλυτοῦ Ἑρμιονῆος. Τὸ εὐτελέστατον προσφέρων τῆς τοιαύτης πολυτελείας, ὅτι δὲ θεοσεβείας γνώμῃ κεκόσμητο· μετ' ἀστῆς γὰρ πάντα θεοφιλῆ, καὶ ἄνευ ταύτης οὐδὲν ἂν θεῷ φίλον ἂν πότε γένοιτο.—*Hieroc. in Pyth.*

Plebs devota veni, perque hæc commercia disce
Terreno censu regna superna peti.
Simplicius P. in Expositione Ecclesiæ S. Andreæ in Roma.

[b] Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris,
Ædesque labentes deorum, et
Fœda nigro simulachra fumo.—*Hor.* lib. iii. od. 6.

Impietatis notatur Zeno, quòd dixerit ἐρὰ θεῶν μὴ οἰκοδομεῖν. Et barbarorum gentium mos erat aras diis ponere in lucis, nemoribus, et montium jugis, eò quòd deos templis includendos non esse dixerant.

of presents is most proportionable: and although the service of the soul and spirit is most delectable and esteemed by God; yet, because our souls are served by things perishing and material, and we are of that constitution, that by the body we serve the spirit, and by both we serve God, as the spirit is chiefly to be offered to God, because it is better than the body, so the richest oblation is the best in an equal power and the same person, because it is the best of things material: and although it hath not the excellency of the spirit, it hath an excellency that a cheap oblation hath not; and besides the advantage of the natural value, it can no otherwise be spoiled than a meaner offering may; it is always capable of the same commendation from the piety of the presenter's spirit, and may be as much purified and made holy as the cheaper or the more contemptible. God hath nowhere expressed that he accepts of a cheaper offering, but when we are not able to give him better. When the people brought offerings more than enough for the tabernacle, Moses restrained their forwardness, by saying, "it was enough," but yet commended the disposition highly, and wished it might be perpetual: but God chid the people when they let his house lie waste, without reparation of its decaying beauty; and therefore sent famines upon the land, and a curse into their estate, because they would not, by giving a portion to religion, sanctify and secure all the rest. For the way for a man to be a saver by his religion, is to deposit one part of his estate in the temple, and one in the hands of the poor; for these are God's treasury and stewards respectively: and this is "laying up treasures in heaven;" and besides that it will procure blessing to other parts, it will help to save our souls; and that is good husbandry, that is worth the saving.

13. For I consider that those riches and beauties, in churches and religious solemnities, which add nothing to God, add much devotion to us, and much honour and efficacy to devotion. For since impression is made upon the soul, by the intervening of corporal things, our religion and devotion of the soul receives the addition of many degrees by such instruments[c]. Insomuch that we see persons of the greatest fancy, and such who are most pleased with outward

[c] Τὰ αἰσθήσει καλὰ, καὶ νόησιν καλῶν εἰκόνας.—*Philo.*

fairnesses, are most religious. Great understandings make religion lasting and reasonable; but great fancies make it more scrupulous, strict, operative, and effectual. And therefore it is strange, that we shall bestow such great expenses, to make our own houses convenient and delectable, that we may entertain ourselves with complacency and appetite; and yet think that religion is not worth the ornament, nor our fancies fit to be carried into the choice and prosecution of religious actions, with sweetness, entertainments, and fair propositions. If we say, that God is not the better for a rich house, or a costly service; we may also remember, that neither are we the better for rich clothes; and the sheep will keep us as modest, as warm, and as clean, as the silk-worm; and a gold chain, or a carkenet of pearl, does no more contribute to our happiness, than it does to the service of religion. For if we reply, that they help to the esteem and reputation of our persons, and the distinction of them from the vulgar, from the servants of the lot of Issachar, and add reverence and veneration to us; how great a shame is it, if we study by great expenses to get reputation and accidental advantages to ourselves, and not by the same means to purchase reverence and esteem to religion; since we see that religion, amongst persons of ordinary understandings, receives as much external and accidental advantages, by the accession of exterior ornaments and accommodation, as we ourselves can, by rich clothes and garments of wealth, ceremony, and distinction? And as, in princes' courts, the reverence to princes is quickened and increased by an outward state and glory; so also it is in the service of God. Although the understandings of men are no more satisfied by a pompous magnificence, than by a cheap plainness; yet the eye is, and the fancy, and the affections, and the senses; that is, many of our faculties are more pleased with religion, when religion, by such instruments and conveyances, pleases them. And it was noted by Sozomen, concerning Valens, the Arrian emperor, that when he came to Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, he praised St. Basil, their bishop, and upon more easy terms revoked his banishment[d], because he was a grave person, and

[d] Quòd cum tanto ornatu tamque decenter sacerdotio fungeretur, conventusque ageret.

did his holy offices with reverent and decent addresses, and kept his church-assemblies with much ornament and solemnity.

14. But when I consider that saying of St. Gregory, that the church is heaven within the tabernacle, heaven dwelling among the sons of men[e], and remember, that God hath studded all the firmament, and paved it with stars, because he loves to have his house beauteous, and highly representative of his glory; I see no reason we should not do as Apollinaris says God does: "In earth do the works of heaven." For he is the God of beauties and perfections[f]; and every excellency in the creature, is a portion of influence from the Divinity, and therefore is the best instrument of conveying honour to him, who made them for no other end but for his own honour, as the last resort of all other ends for which they were created.

15. But the best manner to reverence the sanctuary, is by the continuation of such actions which gave it the first title of holiness. "Holiness becometh thine house for ever," saith David: "Sancta sanctis," holy persons and holy rites, in holy places[g]; that, as it had the first relation of sanctity by the consecration of a holy and reverend minister and president of religion, so it may be perpetuated in holy offices, and receive the daily consecration, by the assistance of sanctified and religious persons. "Foris canes," dogs and criminal persons are unfit for churches; the best ornament and beauty of a church, is a holy priest and a sanctified people[h]. For,

[e] Ἐκκλησία ἐστὶν οὐρανὸς ἐπίγειος.

[f] Ἔργον τὸ μέγα, καὶ καλὸν τίμιον· τοῦ γὰρ τοιούτου ἡ θεωρία θαυμαστή.—*Arist.*

[g] Gravitas honesta, diligentia attonita, cura solicita, apparitio devota, et processio modesta.—*Tert. de Præscript.*

Confluunt ad ecclesiam castâ celebritate, honestâ utriusque sexûs discretione.—*S. Aug.* lib. ii. c. 28. *de Civit. Dei.*

[h] Τὰ γὰρ κατὰ πόλεις προσευκτήρια τί ἕτερόν ἐστιν ἢ διδασκαλία φρονήσεως καὶ ἀνδρείας, καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης, ἐυσεβείας τε καὶ ὁσιότητος, καὶ συμπάσης ἀρετῆς;—*Philo Legat. ad Caium.*

Μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾷν ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων, καὶ ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, καὶ ναὸν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ θείου φωτὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ παρασκευάζων νοῦν.—*Hier. in Pyth.*

Ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ γῆς θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει· οἷς καὶ ὁ Πύθιος συμφέρεται, λέγων, Εὐσεβέσιν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσσον ὀλύμπῳ.—*Idem.*

Quin demus id superis ———
Compositum jus fasque animis, sanctosque recessus
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto:
Hæc cedò ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.—*Pers. Sat.* ii.

since angels dwell in churches, and God hath made his name to dwell there too; if there also be a holy people, that there be saints as well as angels, it is a holy fellowship, and a blessed communion: but to see a devil there, would scare the most confident and bold fancy, and disturb the good meeting; and such is every wicked and graceless person: "Have I not chosen twelve of you, and one of you is a devil?" An evil soul is an evil spirit, and such are no good ornaments for temples: and it is a shame that a goodly Christian church should be like an Egyptian temple; without, goodly buildings; within, a dog or a cat, for the deity they adore. It is worse, if in our addresses to holy places and offices, we bear our lusts under our garments. For dogs and cats are of God's making, but our lusts are not, but are God's enemies; and therefore, besides the unholiness, it is an affront to God to bring them along, and it defiles the place in a great degree.

16. For there is a defiling of a temple by insinuation of impurities, and another by direct and positive profanation, and a third by express sacrilege. This "defiles a temple" to the ground. Every small sin is an unwelcome guest, and is a spot in those "feasts of charity," which entertain us often in God's houses: but there are some, (and all great crimes are such,) which desecrate the place, unhallow the ground as to our particulars, stop the ascent of our prayers, obstruct the current of God's blessing, turn religion into bitterness, and devotion into gall; such as are marked in Scripture with a distinguishing character, as enemies to the peculiar dispositions of religion: and such are, unchastity, which defiles the temples of our bodies; covetousness, which sets up an idol instead of God; and unmercifulness, which is a direct enemy to the mercies of God, and the fair return of our prayers. He that shows not the mercies of alms, of forgiveness, and comfort, is forbidden to hope for comfort, relief, or forgiveness, from the hands of God. A pure mind is the best manner of worship[1], and the impurity of a crime is the

[1] Animadverto gratiorem existimari qui delubris deorum puram castamque mentem, quàm qui meditatum carmen intulerit.—*Plin. Sec. Pan. Trajan.*

Ἁγνὸν δὴ ναιοῖο θυώδεος ἔνδον ἰόντα Ἐμφάμεν· ἁγνείη δ' ἐστὶ, φρονεῖν ὅσια.—*Porphyr. de Non Esu Animal.* lib. ii.

Optimus animus pulcherrimus cultus. Μὴ καθαρῷ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι οὐ μὴ θεμιτόν.—*Hierocl.*

greatest contradiction to the honour and religion of holy places. And, therefore, let us imitate the precedent of the most religious of kings; "I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar[k];" always remembering those decretory and final words of St. Paul, "He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy[l]."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who "dwellest not in temples made with hands; the heaven of heavens is not able to contain thee," and yet thou art pleased to manifest thy presence amongst the sons of men, by special issues of thy favour and benediction; make my body and soul to be a temple pure and holy, apt for the entertainments of the holy Jesus, and for the habitation of the Holy Spirit. Lord, be pleased, with thy rod of paternal discipline, to cast out all impure lusts, all worldly affections, all covetous desires, from this thy temple; that it may be a place of prayer and meditation, of holy appetites and chaste thoughts, of pure intentions and zealous desires of pleasing thee; that I may become also a sacrifice, as well as a temple; eaten up with the zeal of thy glory, and consumed with the fire of love; that not one thought may be entertained by me, but such as may be like perfume, breathing from the altar of incense; and not a word may pass from me, but may have the accent of heaven upon it, and sound pleasantly in thy ears. O dearest God, fill every faculty of my soul with impresses, dispositions, capacities, and aptnesses of religion; and do thou hallow my soul, that I may be possessed with zeal and religious affections; loving thee above all things in the world, worshipping thee with the humblest adorations and frequent addresses, continually feeding upon the apprehensions of thy divine sweetness, and consideration of thy infinite excellences, and observations of thy righteous commandments, and the feast of a holy conscience, as an antepast of eternity, and consignation to the joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[k] Ps. xxvi. 6. [l] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

SECTION XII.

Of Jesus's Departure into Galilee; his Manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching; his calling of Disciples; and what happened until the Second Passover.

1. "WHEN Jesus understood that John was cast into prison[a]," and that the Pharisees were envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to his baptism, which he ministered, not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, (who, as Euodius[b], bishop of Antioch, reports, baptized the blessed Virgin, his mother, and Peter only; and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and they others;) he left Judæa, and came into Galilee; and in his passage he must touch Sychar, a city of Samaria, where, in the heat of the day and the weariness of his journey, he sat himself down upon the margin of Jacob's well; whither, when "his disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan woman cometh to draw water," of whom Jesus asked some, to cool his thirst, and refresh his weariness.

2. Little knew the woman the excellency of the person, that asked so small a charity: neither had she been taught, that "a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded," and much rather such a present to the Lord himself. But she prosecuted the spite of her nation[c], and the interest and quarrel of the schism; and, instead of washing Jesus's feet, and giving him drink, demanded, why he, "being a Jew, should ask water of a Samaritan? for the Jews have no intercoure with the Samaritans."

3. The ground of the quarrel was this. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, Salmanasar, king of Assyria, sacked Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Assyrian colony in the town and country; who, by Divine vengeance, were destroyed by lions, which no power of man could restrain or lessen. The king thought the cause was, their

[a] Matt. iv. 12.

[b] Euthym. c. 3, in Joan. Apud Nicep. lib. ii. c. 3. Hist.

[c] Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.—*Juv. Sat.* xiv.

not serving the God of Israel according to the rites of Moses; and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest, to instruct the remanent inhabitants in the Jewish religion; who so learned and practised it, that they still retained the superstition of the Gentile rites; till Manasses, the brother of Jaddi, the high priest at Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governor under king Darius. Manasses being reproved for marrying a stranger, the daughter of an uncircumcised Gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to Samaria, persuades his father-in-law to build a temple in mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Aaron, and commences a schism, in the time of Alexander the Great. From whence the question of religion grew so high, that it begat disaffections, anger, animosities, quarrels, bloodshed, and murders; not only in Palestine, but wherever a Jew and Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet. Such being the nature of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world, when other men are not of their minds; and that they please God most, when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed, than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates. This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite that ever any was, because both the people were much given to superstition; and this was helped forward by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals and ceremonials, and which they cared not much to hallow and make moral, by the intertexture of spiritual senses and charity. And, therefore, the Jews called the Samaritans "accursed;" the Samaritans, at the paschal solemnity, would at midnight, when the Jews' temple was open, scatter dead men's bones[d], to profane and desecrate the place; and both would fight, and eternally dispute the question; sometimes referring it to arbitrators, and then the conquered party would decline the arbitration after sentence; which they did at Alexandria, before Ptolemæus Philometor, when Andronicus had, by a rare and exquisite oration, procured sentence against Theodosius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates: the sentence was given for Jerusalem, and

[d] Διάῤῥιψιν ἀνθρωπείων ὀστῶν ἐν ταῖς στοαῖς ποιῆσαι.—*Joseph. Ant.* lib. xviii. c. 3.

the schism increased, and lasted till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

4. And it was so implanted and woven in with every understanding, that when the woman "perceived Jesus to be a prophet," she undertook this question with him: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the rent wider: and though he gave testimony to the truth, by saying, "Salvation is of the Jews;" and "we know what we worship, ye do not;" yet, because the subject of this question was shortly to be taken away, Jesus takes occasion to preach the Gospel, to hasten an expedient, and, by way of anticipation, to reconcile the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation, to be verified for ever. Neither here nor there, by way of confinement; not in one country more than another; but wherever any man shall call upon God "in spirit and truth," there he shall be heard.

5. But all this while the holy Jesus was athirst, and therefore hastens at least to discourse of water, though as yet he got none. He tells her of "living water," of eternal satisfactions, of "never thirsting again," of her own personal condition of matrimonial relation, and professes himself to be the Messias; and then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to see him alone, "talking with a woman," besides his custom and usual reservation. But the woman, full of joy and wonder, left her water-pot, and ran to the city, to publish the Messias: and immediately "all the city came out to see; and many believed on him upon the testimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own discourses." They invited him to the town, and received him with hospitable civilities for two days, after which he departed to his own Galilee.

6. Jesus, therefore, came into the country, where he was received with respect and fair entertainment, because of the miracles which the Galileans saw done by him at the feast; and being at Cana, where he wrought the first miracle, a a noble personage; a little king, say some; a palatine, says St. Jerome; a kingly person, certainly, came to Jesus with much reverence, and desire that he would be pleased to come to his house, and cure his son, now ready to die;

which he seconds with much importunity, fearing lest his son be dead before he get thither. Jesus, who did not do his miracles by natural operations, cured the child at distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him his son lived; which, by narration of his servants, he found to be true, and that he recovered at the same time when Jesus spake these salutary and healing words. Upon which accident he and all his house became disciples.

7. And now Jesus left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum, a maritime town, and of great resort, choosing that for his scene of preaching, and his place of dwelling. For now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptist was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand. He, therefore, preached the sum of the Gospel, faith and repentance: "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." And what that Gospel was, the sum and series of all his sermons afterwards did declare.

8. The work was now grown high and pregnant, and Jesus saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service in the work of preaching, and to be "witnesses of all that he should say, do, or teach," for ends which were afterwards made public and excellent. Jesus, therefore, "as he walked by the sea of Galilee," called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before, by the preaching of John; and now "left all," their ship and their net, "and followed him. And when he was gone a little farther, he calls the two sons of Zebedee, James and John; and they went after him." And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacs, cleansing lepers, and giving strength to paralytics and lame people.

9. But when "the people pressed on him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth," and presently "entering into Simon's ship," commanded him "to launch into the deep," and "from thence he taught the people," and there wrought a miracle; for, being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the fishes of the sea, and they obeyed. For when Simon, who had "fished all night in vain, let down his net at the command of Jesus, he enclosed so great a multitude of fishes, that the net brake;" and the fishermen were amazed and fearful at so prodigious a draught. But beyond the miracle, it was intended, that a representation

should be made of the plenitude of the catholic church, and multitudes of believers, who should be taken by Simon and the rest of the disciples, whom by that miracle he consigned to become " fishers of men;" who, by their artifices of prudence, and holy doctrine, might gain souls to God; that when the net should be drawn to shore, and separation made by the angels, they and their disciples might be differenced from the reprobate portion.

10. But the light of the sun uses not to be confined to a province or a kingdom. So great a prophet, and so divine a physician, and so great miracles, created a fame loud as thunder, but not so full of sadness and presage. Immediately the " fame of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judæa." And all that had any " sick with divers diseases, brought them to him;" and he laid his hands on every one of them, " and healed them." And when he cured the " lunatics, and persons possessed with evil spirits," the devils cried out, and confessed him to be " Christ, the Son of God;" but he " suffered them not," choosing rather to work faith in the persuasions of his disciples, by moral arguments, and the placid demonstrations of the Spirit; that there might in faith be an excellency in proportion to the choice, and that it might not be made violent by the conviction and forced testimonies of accursed and unwilling spirits.

11. But when Jesus saw his assembly was grown full, and his audience numerous, he " went up into a mountain," and when his disciples came unto him, he made that admirable sermon, called " the sermon upon the mount:" which is a Divine repository of such excellent truths, and mysterious dictates of secret theology, that contains a breviary of all those precepts which integrate the morality of Christian religion; pressing the moral precepts given by Moses, and enlarging their obligation by a stricter sense and more severe exposition, that their righteousness might " exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees;" " preaches perfection, and the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, Christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and toleration of injuries; affixing a special promise of blessing to be the guerdon and inheritance of those graces and spiritual excellences. He explicates some parts of the

decalogue, and adds appendices and precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries, an indifference and incuriousness of temporal provisions, and a seeking of the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness."

12. When Jesus had finished his sermon, and descended from the mountain, a poor leprous person came and worshipped, and begged to be cleansed; which Jesus soon granted, engaging him not to publish it where he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest, to offer an oblation, according to the rites of Moses' law; and then came directly to Capernaum, and "taught in their synagogues upon the sabbath-days;" where, in his sermons, he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God; not inviting the people by the soft arguments and insinuations of Scribes and Pharisees, but by demonstrations and issues of Divinity. There he cures a demoniac, in one of their synagogues; and by and by, after going abroad, he heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever; insomuch that he grew the talk of all men, and their wonder, till they flocked so to him, to see him, to hear him, to satisfy their curiosity and their needs, that after he had healed those multitudes which beset the house of Simon, where he cured his mother of the fever, he retired himself into a desert place very early in the morning, that he might have an opportunity to pray, free from the oppressions and noises of the multitude.

13. But neither so could he be hid, but, like a light shining by the fringes of a curtain, he was soon discovered in his solitude; for the multitude found him out, imprisoning him in their circuits and undeniable attendances. But Jesus told them plainly, he must preach the Gospel "to other cities also;" and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Genesareth, so to quit the throng. Whither as he was going, a Scribe offered himself a disciple to his institution; till Jesus told him his condition to be worse than foxes and birds, for whom an habitation is provided, but none for him; no, "not a place where to bow his head," and find rest. And what became of this forward professor afterwards, we find not. Others that were probationers of this fellowship, Jesus bound to a speedy profession; not suffering one to go

home to bid his friends farewell, nor another so much as to "bury his dead."

14. By the time Jesus got to the ship it was late; and he, heavy to sleep, rested on a pillow, and slept soundly, as weariness, meekness, and innocence could make him; insomuch that "a violent storm," the chiding of the winds and waters, which then happened, could not awake him; till the ship, being almost covered with broken billows and the impetuous dashings of the waters, the men already sunk in their spirits, and the ship like enough to sink too, the disciples awaked him, and called for help: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus arising, reproved their infidelity, commanded the wind to be still and the seas peaceable, and immediately "there was a great calm;" and they presently arrived in the land of the Gergesenes, or Gerasenes.

15. In the land of Gergesites, or Gergesenes, which was the remaining name of an extinct people, being one of the nations whom the sons of Jacob drave from their inheritance, there were two cities; Gadara, from the tribe of Gad, to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land, (which, having been destroyed by the Jews, was rebuilt by Pompey, at the request of Demetrius Gadarensis, Pompey's freed-man,) and near to it was Gerasa, as Josephus reports[e]: which diversity of towns and names is the cause of the various recitation of this story by the evangelists. Near the city of Gadara, there were many sepulchres in the hollownesses of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invocating evil spirits; insomuch that, at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, "there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce," and so had been long, "insomuch that no man durst pass that way."

16. Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed persons: but there were certain men feeding swine, which, though extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies and quarterings of soldiers, they were permitted, and divers privileges granted to the masters of such herds[f]: and because Gadara was a Greek

[e] Joseph. de Bel. Jud. lib. i. c. 5, et lib. iii. c. 2, et lib. v. c. 3. Epiph. contr. Eb. Hæres. 30.

[f] Cod. Theod. de Suariis. Joseph. lib. ii. de Bel. Jud. c. 33.

city, and the company mingled of Greeks, Syrians, and Jews; these last, in all likelihood, not making the greatest number; the devils, therefore, besought Jesus, he would not send them into the abyss, but " permit them to enter into the swine." He gave them leave; " and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the" hot baths, which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built, (which smaller congregation of waters the Jews used to call sea[s];) or else, as others think, into the lake of Genesareth, " and perished in the waters." But this accident so troubled the inhabitants, that they came and " entreated Jesus to depart out of their coasts." And he did so; leaving " Galilee of the Gentiles," he came to the lesser Galilee, and so again to the city of Capernaum.

17. But when he was come thither, he was met by divers " Scribes and Pharisees," who came from Jerusalem, and " doctors of the law from Galilee;" and while they were sitting in a house, which was encompassed with multitudes, that no business or necessity could be admitted to the door, a poor paralytic was brought to be cured; and they were fain to " uncover the tiles of the house, and let him down in his bed with cords, in the midst before Jesus," sitting in conference with the doctors. " When Jesus saw their faith, he said, Man, thy sins be forgiven thee." At which saying, the Pharisees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy, and that " none but God could forgive sins;" Jesus was put to verify his absolution, which he did in a just satisfaction and proportion to their understandings. For the Jews did believe that all afflictions were punishments for sin; (" Who sinned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?") and that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin. And therefore, Jesus, to prove that his sins were forgiven, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin; and by curing the palsy, prevented their farther murmur about the pardon: " That ye might know the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. And the man arose, was healed, and glorified God."

18. A while after, Jesus went again toward the sea, and

[s] Ut mare Æneum, vas templi ad aquarum receptionem.

on his way, "seeing Matthew," the publican, "sitting at the receipt of custom," he bade him "follow him." Matthew first feasted Jesus, and then became his disciple. But the Pharisees that were with him began to be troubled that he "ate with publicans and sinners." For the office of publican, though amongst the Romans it was honest and of great account; and "the flower of the Roman knights, the ornament of the city, the security of the commonwealth, was accounted to consist in the society of publicans[h];" yet amongst both the Jews and Greeks the name was odious[i], and the persons were accursed; not only because they were strangers that were the chief of them, who took into them some of the nation where they were employed; but because the Jews especially stood upon the charter of their nation and the privilege of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also because they exercised great injustices and oppressions[k], having a power unlimited, and a covetousness wide as hell, and greedy as the fire or the grave. But Jesus gave so fair an account concerning his converse with these persons, that the objection turned to be his apology: for therefore he conversed with them, because they were sinners; and it was as if a physician should be reproved for having so much to do with sick persons; for therefore was he "sent, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance;" to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of sacrifice.

19. But as the little bubbling and gentle murmurs of the water are presages of a storm, and are more troublesome in their prediction than their violence; so were the arguings of the Pharisees, symptoms of a secret displeasure and an ensuing war; though at first represented in the civilities of question and scholastical discourses, yet they did but forerun vigorous objections and bold calumnies, which were the fruits of the next summer. But as yet they discoursed fairly, asking him "why John's disciples fasted often, but the dis-

[h] Cicero Ep. Famil. lib. xiii. et in Orat. pro Plancio.

[i] Idem ad Quint. Fratrem de Regimine Præfecturæ Asian.

[k] Vita Publicanorum aperta est violentia, impunita rapina, negotiatio nullâ ratione constans, inverecunda mercatura.

Πάντες τελῶναι, πάντες εἰσὶν ἅρπαγες. — *Suidas, V. Publicanus.*

Apud Hebræum textum D. Matthæi publicani dicti *Parisim*, nomine proprio latronibus qui sepes et maceriam dirimunt, licèt propriè dicti *Gabaim*; unde fortasse *Gabella*.

ciples of Jesus did not fast?" Jesus told them, it was because these were the days in which the Bridegroom was come in person to espouse the church unto himself; and, therefore, for "the children of the bride-chamber to fast" then, was like the bringing of a dead corpse to the joys of a bride, or the pomps of coronation; "the days should come, that the bridegroom should retire" into his chamber, and draw the curtains, "and then they should fast in those days."

20. While Jesus was discoursing with the Pharisees, "Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came to him," desiring he would help his daughter, who lay in the confines of death, ready to depart. Whither as he was going, "a woman met him, who had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve years," without hope of remedy from art or nature; and therefore she runs to Jesus, thinking, without precedent, upon the confident persuasions of a holy faith, "that if she did but touch the hem of his garment, she should be whole." She came trembling, and full of hope and reverence, and "touched his garment, and immediately the fountain of her unnatural emanation was stopped," and reverted to its natural course and offices. St. Ambrose says, that this woman was Martha. But it is not likely that she was a Jewess, but a Gentile; because of that return which she made, in memory of her cure and honour of Jesus, according to the Gentile rites. For Eusebius reports[1], that himself saw, at Cæsarea Philippi, a statue of brass, representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said, it was erected by the care and cost of this woman; adding, (whether out of truth or easiness is not certain,) that at the pedestal of this statue an usual plant did grow, which, when it was come up to that maturity and height as to arrive at the fringes of the brass monument, it was medicinal in many dangerous diseases: so far Eusebius. Concerning which story I shall make no censure but this,

[1] Lib. vii. Hist. c. 14.

Ἐπίσημον Χριστοῦ ἄγαλμα, et τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀνδριάντα.—*Apud Sozomen.* lib. v. c. 20.

Johan. Damas. de Imagin. Orat. iii. ex Chronico Johan. Melalæ Antioch. Episc. ait, supplicem libellum oblatum Philippo Tetrarchæ Trachonitidis regionis, ut liceret statuas erigere in memoriam accepti beneficii.

that since St. Mark and St. Luke affirm, that this woman, before her cure, "had spent all her substance upon physicians[m]," it is not easily imaginable how she should become able to dispend so great a sum of money, as would purchase two so great statues of brass: and if she could, yet it is still more unlikely that the Gentile princes and proconsuls, who searched all places, public and private, and were curiously diligent to destroy all honorary monuments of Christianity, should let this alone; and that this should escape, not only the diligence of the persecutors, but the fury of such wars and changes as happened in Palestine, and that for three hundred years together it should stand up in defiance of all violences and changeable fate of all things. However it be, it is certain, that the book against images, published by the command of Charles the Great, eight hundred and fifty years ago, gave no credit to the story; and if it had been true, it is more than probable, that Justin Martyr[n], who was born and bred in Palestine, and Origen, who lived many years in Tyre, in the neighbourhood of the place where the statue is said to stand, and were highly diligent to heap together all things of advantage and reputation to the Christian cause, would not have omitted so notable an instance. It is therefore likely that the statues which Eusebius saw, and concerning which he heard such stories, were first placed there upon the stock of a heathen story or ceremony; and in process of time, for the likeness of the figures, and its capacity to be translated to the Christian story, was, by the Christians in after ages, attributed, by a fiction of fancy, and afterwards by credulity, confidently applied to the present narrative.

21. "When Jesus was come to the ruler's house," he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jairus's daughter, and his servants had met him, and acquainted him of "the death of the child;" yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, and "entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand, called her," and awakened her from her sleep of death, and "commanded them to give her to eat," and enjoined them not to publish the miracle. But as flames, suppressed by violent detentions, break out and rage with a more impetuous and rapid motion;

[m] Mark, v. 26. Luke, viii. 43. [n] Lib. iv. de Imagin. cap. 15.

so it happened to Jesus; who, endeavouring to make the noises and reports of him less popular, made them to be œcumenical; for not only we do that most greedily from which we are most restrained, but a great merit, enamelled with humility, and restrained with modesty, grows more beauteous and florid, up to the heights of wonder and glories.

22. As he came from Jairus's house, he cured two blind men upon their petition, and confession that they did believe in him; and cast out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy, but said, "he cast out devils by help of the devils:" their malice being, as usually it is, contradictory to its own design, by its being unreasonable; nothing being more sottish than for the devil to divide his kingdom upon a plot; to ruin his certainties upon hopes future and contingent. But this was but the first eruption of their malice; all the year last past, which was the first year of Jesus's preaching, all was quiet; neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans, did malign his doctrine or person, but he preached with much peace on all hands*; for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction "the acceptable year of the Lord."

Ad SECTION XII.

Considerations upon the Intercourse happening between the Holy Jesus and the Woman of Samaria.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus, perceiving it unsafe to be at Jerusalem, returned to Galilee, where the largest scene of his prophetical office was to be represented, he journeyed on foot through Samaria; and being weary and faint, hungry and thirsty, he sat down by a well, and begged water of a Samaritan woman that was a sinner; who at first refused him, with some incivility of language. But he, instead of returning anger and passion to her rudeness, which was com-

* Epiphan. in Panar. lib. ii. tom. 1. hæres. 51.

menced upon the interest of a mistaken religion[a], preached the coming of the Messias to her, unlocked the secrets of her heart, and let in his grace, and made "a fountain of living water to spring up" in her soul, to extinguish the impure flames of lust which had set her on fire, burning like hell ever since the death of her fifth husband[b], she then becoming a concubine to the sixth. Thus Jesus transplanted nature into grace, his hunger and thirst into religious appetites, the darkness of the Samaritan into a clear revelation, her sin into repentance and charity, and so quenched his own thirst by relieving her needs: and as "it was meat to him to do his Father's will," so it was drink to him to bring us to drink of "the fountain of living water." For thus God declared it to be a delight to him to see us live, as if he were refreshed by those felicities which he gives to us as communications of his grace, and instances of mercy, and consignations to heaven. Upon which we can look with no eye but such as sees and admires the excellency of the Divine charity, which, being an emanation from the mercies and essential compassion of eternity, God cannot choose but rejoice in it, and love the works of his mercy, who was so well pleased in the works of his power. He that was delighted in the creation, was highly pleased in the nearer conveyances of himself, when he sent the holy Jesus to bear his image, and his mercies, and his glories, and offer them to the use and benefit of man. For this was the chief of the works of God, and therefore the blessed Master could not but be highliest pleased with it, in imitation of his heavenly Father.

2. The woman, observing our Saviour to have come with his face from Jerusalem, was angry at him upon the quarrel of the old schism. The Jews and the Samaritans had differing rites, and the zealous persons upon each side did commonly dispute themselves into uncharitableness: and so have Christians upon the same confidence, and zeal, and mistake. For although "righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor Christ with Belial;" yet the consideration of the crime of heresy, which is a spiritual wickedness, is to be

[a] Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, adversus omnes alios hostile odium.—*Tacit.*

[b] Quæ nubit toties non nubit, adultera lege est. Offendor mœchâ simpliciore minùs.—*Martial. Ep.*

separate from the person, who is material. That is, no spiritual communion is to be endured with heretical persons, when it is certain they are such, when they are convinced by competent authority and sufficient argument. But the persons of the men are to be pitied, to be reproved, to be redargued and convinced, to be wrought upon by fair compliances and the offices of civility, and invited to the family of faith by the best arguments of charity, and the instances of a holy life; "having your conversation honest among them, that they may, beholding your good works, glorify God in the day when he shall visit them[c]." Indeed, if there be danger, that is, a weak understanding may not safely converse in civil society with a subtle heretic; in such cases they are to be avoided[d], not saluted: but as this is only when the danger is by reason of the unequal capacities and strengths of the person; so it must be only when the article is certainly heresy, and the person criminal, and interest is the ingredient in the persuasion, and a certain and a necessary truth destroyed by the opinion. We read that St. John, spying Cerinthus in a bath, refused to wash there where the enemy of God and his holy Son had been[e]. This is a good precedent for us when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus; and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal, and the apostle a person assisted up to infallibility. And possibly it was done by the whisper of a prophetic spirit, and upon a miraculous design; for, immediately upon his retreat, the bath fell down, and crushed Cerinthus in the ruins. But such acts of aversation as these, are not easily, by us, to be drawn into example, unless in the same, or the parallel concourse, of equally concluding accidents. We must not quickly, nor upon slight grounds, nor unworthy instances, call heretic; there had need be a long process, and a high conviction, and a competent judge, and a necessary article, that must be ingredients into so sad and decretory definitions, and condemnation of a person or opinion. But if such instances occur, come not near the danger nor the scandal. And this advice St. Cyprian[f] gave to the lay people of his diocese: "Let them decline their discourses,

[c] 1 Pet. ii. 12. [d] Tit. iii. 10. 2 Epist. John, x.
[e] Irenæ. lib. iii. cap. 3. Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 13.
[f] Lib. i. ep. 3.

whose sermons creep and corrode like a cancer; let there be no colloquies, no banquets, no commerce with such who are excommunicate, and justly driven from the communion of the church." "For such persons (as St. Leo[g] descants upon the apostle's expression of heretical discourses) creep in humbly, and with small and modest beginnings; they catch with flattery, they bind gently, and kill privily." Let, therefore, all persons who are in danger, secure their persons and persuasions, by removing far from the infection. And for the scandal, St. Herminigilda gave an heroic example, which, in her persuasion, and the circumstances of the age and action, deserved the highest testimony of zeal, religious passion, and confident persuasion. For she rather chose to die by the mandate of her tyrant father, Leonigildus the Goth, than she would, at the paschal solemnity, receive the blessed sacrament at the hand of an Arian bishop[h].

3. But excepting these cases, which are not to be judged with forwardness, nor rashly taken measure of, we find, that conversing charitably with persons of differing persuasions, hath been instrumental to their conversion, and God's glory. "The believing wife" may "sanctify the unbelieving husband;" and we find it verified in church-story. St. Cecily converted her husband Valerianus; St. Theodora converted Sisinius; St. Monica converted Patricius, and Theodelinda Agilulphus; St. Clotilda persuaded king Clodoveus to be a Christian; and St. Natolia persuaded Adrianus to be a martyr. For they, having their conversation honest and holy amongst the unbelievers, shined like virgin-tapers in the midst of an impure prison, and amused the eyes of the sons of darkness with the brightness of the flame. For the excellency of a holy life is the best argument of the inhabitation of God within the soul: and who will not offer up his understanding upon that altar, where a Deity is placed as the president and author of religion? And this very intercourse of the holy Jesus with the woman is abundant argument, that it were well we were not so forward to refuse communion with dissenting persons, upon the easy and confident mistakes of a too forward zeal. They that call heretic may themselves be the mistaken persons, and, by refusing to communicate the

[g] Serm. 5. de Jejun. Decimi Mensis. [h] Gregor. lib. iii. dial. iii. 13.

civilities of hospitable entertainment, may shut their doors upon truth, and their windows against light, and refuse to let salvation in. For sometimes ignorance is the only parent of our persuasions, and many times interest hath made an impure commixture with it, and so produced the issue.

4. The holy Jesus gently insinuates his discourses. "If thou hadst known who it is that asks thee water, thou wouldest have asked water of him." Oftentimes we know not the person that speaks, and we usually choose our doctrine by our affections to the man: but then, if we are uncivil upon the stock of prejudice, we do not know that it is Christ that calls our understandings to obedience, and our affections to duty and compliances. The woman little thought of the glories, which stood right against her. He that sat upon the well, had a throne placed above the heads of cherubims. In his arms, who there rested himself, was the sanctuary of rest and peace, where wearied souls were to lay their heads, and dispose their cares, and there to turn them into joys, and to gild their thorns with glory. That holy tongue, which was parched with heat, streamed forth rivulets of holy doctrine, which were to water all the world, to turn our deserts into paradise. And though he begged water at Jacob's well, yet Jacob drank at his: for at his charge all Jacob's flocks and family were sustained, and by him Jacob's posterity were made honourable and redeemed. But because this well was deep, and the woman "had nothing to draw water with," and of herself could not fathom so great a depth, therefore she refused him; just as we do, when we refuse to give drink to a thirsty disciple. Christ comes in that humble manner of address, under the veil of poverty or contempt, and we cannot see Christ from under that robe, and we send him away without an alms; little considering, that when he begs an alms of us in the instance of any of his poor relatives, he asks of us but to give him occasion to give a blessing for an alms. Thus do the ministers of religion ask support; but when the laws are not more just than many of the people are charitable, they shall fare as their Master did; they shall preach, but, unless they can draw water themselves, they shall not drink; but, *si scirent*, if men did but know who it is that asks them, that it is Christ, either in his ministers, or Christ in his poor servants, certainly they could not be so obstructed in the

issues of their justice and charity, but would remember that no honour could be greater, no love more fortunate, than to meet with an opportunity to be expressed in so noble a manner, that God himself is pleased to call his own relief.

5. When the disciples had returned from the town, whither they went to buy provision, they "wondered to see" the Master "talking" alone "with a woman." They knew he never did so before; they had observed him to be of a reserved deportment, and not only innocent, but secure from the dangers of malice and suspicion in the matter of incontinence. The Jews were a jealous and froward people: and as nothing will more blast the reputation of a prophet than effeminacy and wanton affections; so he knew no crime was sooner objected, or harder cleared, than that. Of which, because commonly it is acted in privacy, men look for no probation, but pregnant circumstances and arguments of suspect: so nothing can wash it off, until a man can prove a negative; and if he could, yet he is guilty enough in the estimate of the vulgar for having been accused. But then, because nothing is so destructive of the reputation of a governor, so contradictory to the authority and dignity of his person, as the low and baser appetites of uncleanness, and the consequent shame and scorn, (insomuch that David, having fallen into it, prayed God to confirm or establish him *spiritu principali*, with the spirit of a prince, the spirit of lust being uningenuous and slavish,) the holy Jesus, who was to establish a new law in the authority of his person, was highly curious so to demean himself, that he might be a person incapable of any such suspicions, and of a temper apt not only to answer the calumny, but also to prevent the jealousy. But yet, now he had a great design in hand, he meant to reveal to the Samaritans the coming of the Messias; and to this, his discourse with the woman was instrumental. And, in imitation of our great Master, spiritual persons, and the guides of others, have been very prudent and reserved in their societies and intercourse with women. Heretics have served their ends upon the impotency of the sex; and having "led captive silly women," led them about as triumphs of lust, and knew no scandal greater than the scandal of heresy, and therefore sought not to decline any, but were infamous in their unwary and lustful mixtures. Simon Magus had

his Helena partner of his lust and heresy; the author of the sect of the Nicolaitans (if St. Jerome was not misinformed) had whole troops of women; Marcion sent a woman as his emissary to Rome; Apelles had his Philomene; Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla; Donatus was served by Lucilla, Helpidius by Agape, Priscillian by Galla, and Arrius spreads his nets, by opportunity of his conversation with the prince's sister, and first he corrupted her, then he seduced the world.

6. But holy persons, preachers of true religion and holy doctrines, although they were careful, by public homilies, to instruct the female disciples, that they who are heirs together with us of the same hope, may be servants in the same discipline and institution; yet they remitted them to "their husbands" and guardians to be "taught at home[i]." And when any personal transactions concerning the needs of their spirit were, of necessity, to intervene between the priest and a woman, the action was done most commonly under public test; or if in private, yet with much caution and observation of circumstance, which might as well prevent suspicion as preserve their innocence. Conversation, and frequent and familiar address, does too much rifle the ligaments and reverence of spiritual authority, and, amongst the best persons, is matter of danger. When the cedars of Libanus have been observed to fall, when David and Solomon have been dishonoured, he is a bold man that will venture farther than he is sent in errand by necessity, or invited by charity, or warranted by prudence. I deny not but some persons have made holy friendships with women; St. Athanasius with a devout and religious virgin, St. Chrysostome with Olympia, St. Jerome with Paula Romana, St. John with the elect Lady, St. Peter and St. Paul with Petronilla[k] and Tecla. And, therefore, it were a jealousy beyond the suspicion of monks and eunuchs, to think it impossible to have a chaste conversation with a distinct sex. 1. A pure and right intention, 2. an intercourse not extended beyond necessity or holy ends, 3. a short stay, 4. great modesty, 5. and the business of religion, will, by God's grace, hallow the visit, and preserve the friendship in its being spiritual, that it may not degenerate

[i] 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

[k] Quam B. Petri filiam naturalem non fuisse rectè probat Baronius.

into carnal affection. And yet, these are only advices useful when there is danger in either of the persons, or some scandal incident to the profession, that to some persons, and in the conjunction of many circumstances, are oftentimes not considerable.

7. When Jesus had resolved to reveal himself to the woman, he first gives her occasion to reveal herself to him, fairly insinuating an opportunity to confess her sins, that, having purged herself from her impurity, she might be apt to entertain the article of the revelation of the Messias. And indeed a crime in our manners is the greatest indisposition of our understanding to entertain the truth and doctrine of the Gospel: especially when the revelation contests against the sin, and professes open hostility to the lust. For faith being the gift of God, and an illumination, the Spirit of God will not give this light to them that prefer their darkness before it; either the will must open the windows, or the light of faith will not shine into the chamber of the soul. "How can ye believe," said our blessed Saviour, "that receive honour one of another[l]?" Ambition and faith, believing God, and seeking of ourselves, are incompetent, and totally incompossible. And therefore Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, spake like an angel, (saith Socrates[m],) saying, "that the mind, which feedeth upon spiritual knowledge, must thoroughly be cleansed. The irascible faculty must first be cured with brotherly love and charity, and the concupiscible must be suppressed with continency and mortification." Then may the understanding apprehend the mysteriousness of Christianity. For, since Christianity is a holy doctrine, if there be any remanent affections to a sin, there is in the soul a party disaffected to the entertainment of the institution, and we usually believe what we have a mind to: our understandings, if a crime be lodged in the will, being like icterical eyes, transmitting the species to the soul with prejudice, disaffection, and colours of their own framing[n]. If a preacher should discourse, that there ought to be a parity amongst Christians, and that their

[l] John, v. 44. [m] Lib. iv. Hist. cap. 23.

[n] Lurida præterea fiunt quæcunque tuentur
Arquati ——————————————
Multaque sunt oculis in eorum denique mista,
Quæ contage suâ palloribus omnia pingunt.— *Lucret.* lib. iv.

goods ought to be in common, all men will apprehend, that not princes and rich persons, but the poor and the servants, would soonest become disciples, and believe the doctrines, because they are the only persons likely to get by them; and it concerns the other not to believe him, the doctrine being destructive of their interests. Just such a persuasion is every persevering love to a vicious habit; it having possessed the understanding with fair opinions of it, and surprised the will with passion and desires, whatsoever doctrine is its enemy, will with infinite difficulty be entertained. And we know a great experience of it, in the article of the Messias dying on the cross, which, though infinitely true, yet, because "to the Jews it was a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness," it could not be believed, they remaining in that indisposition; that is, unless the will were first set right, and they willing to believe any truth, though for it they must disclaim their interest: their understanding was blind, because the heart was hardened, and could not receive the impression of the greatest moral demonstration in the world.

8. The holy Jesus asked water of the woman, unsatisfying water; but promised that himself, to them that ask him, would give waters of life, and satisfaction infinite; so distinguishing the pleasures and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual. Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap, and do not gather in; or gather in, and do not possess; or possess, but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy, we are still unsatisfied, it is with anguish of spirit, and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches makes neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our beverage more pleasant; and it feeds the eye, but never fills it, but, like drink to an hydropic person, increases the thirst, and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard-seed, fills the furrows of the heart; and as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction, but carries content and fulness all the way; and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity; the soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more, not because it wanted any, but that it can now hold more, is more receptive of felicities: and in

every minute of sanctification there is so excellent a condition of joy and high satisfaction, that the very calamities, the afflictions, and persecutions of the world, are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient; like a drop of water falling into a tun of wine, it is ascribed into a new family, losing its own nature by a conversion into the more noble. For now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remanent that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit, and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the throne, whither when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters which were given to us to drink, when, with the rod of God, the rock Christ Jesus was smitten: the Spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters; and when the angel of the covenant hath stirred the pool, whoever descends hither shall find health and peace, joys spiritual, and the satisfactions of eternity.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, fountain of eternal life, thou spring of joy and spiritual satisfactions, let the holy stream of blood and water issuing from thy sacred side cool the thirst, soften the hardness, and refresh the barrenness of my desert soul; that I, thirsting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool stream, may despise all the vainer complacencies of this world, refuse all societies but such as are safe, pious, and charitable, mortify all sottish appetites, and may desire nothing but thee, seek none but thee, and rest in thee with entire dereliction of my own caitive inclinations; that the desires of nature may pass into desires of grace, and my thirst and my hunger may be spiritual, and my hopes placed in thee, and the expresses of my charity upon thy relatives, and all the parts of my life may speak thy love, and obedience to thy commandments: that thou possessing my soul, and all its faculties, during my whole life, I may possess thy glories in the fruition of a blessed eternity; by the light of thy Gospel here, and the streams of thy grace, being guided to thee, the fountain of life and glory, there

to be inebriated with the waters of paradise, with joy, and love, and contemplation, adoring and admiring the beauties of the Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

Ad SECTION XII.

Considerations upon Christ's First Preaching, and the Accidents happening about that Time.

1. "WHEN John was cast into prison, then began Jesus to preach;" not only because the ministry of John, by order of Divine designation, was to precede the publication of Jesus, but also upon prudent considerations and designs of Providence, lest two great personages at once upon the theatre of Palestine might have been occasion of divided thoughts, and these have determined upon a schism, some professing themselves to be of Christ, some of John. For once an offer was made of a dividing question by the spite of the Pharisees, "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and thy disciples fast not?" But when John went off from the scene, then Jesus appeared, like the sun in succession to the morning star, and there were no divided interests upon mistake, or the fond adherences of the followers. And although the holy Jesus would certainly have cured all accidental inconveniences which might have happened in such accidents; yet this may become a precedent to all prelates, to be prudent in avoiding all occasions of a schism, and, rather than divide a people, submit and relinquish an opportunity of preaching to their inferiors, as knowing that God is better served by charity than a homily; and if my modesty made me resign to my inferior, the advantages of honour to God by the cession of humility are of greater consideration than the smaller and accidental advantages of better penned and more accurate discourses. But our blessed Lord, designing to gather disciples, did it in the manner of the more extraordinary persons and doctors of the Jews, and particularly of the Baptist, he initiated them into the institution by the solemnity of a baptism; but yet he was pleased not to minister it in his own person. His apostles were baptized in

John's baptism, said Tertullian[a]; or else, St. Peter only was baptized by his Lord, and he baptized the rest. However, the Lord was pleased to depute the ministry of his servants, that so he might constitute a ministry; that he might reserve it to himself as a specialty to "baptize with the Spirit," as his servants did "with water;" that he might declare, that the efficacy of the rite did not depend upon the dignity of the minister, but his own institution, and the holy covenant; and lastly, lest they who were baptized by him in person might please themselves above their brethren, whose needs were served by a lower ministry.

2. The holy Jesus, the great Physician of our souls, now entering upon his cure, and the diocese of Palestine, which was afterwards enlarged to the pale of the Catholic church, was curious to observe all advantages of prudence for the benefit of souls, by the choice of place, by quitting the place of his education, (which, because it had been poor and humble, was apt to procure contempt to his doctrine, and despite to his person,) by fixing in Capernaum, which had the advantage of popularity, and the opportunity of extending the benefit, yet had not the honour and ambition of Jerusalem; that the ministers of religion might be taught to seek and desire employment in such circumstances which may serve the end of God, but not of ambition; to promote the interest of souls, but not the inordination of lower appetites. Jesus quitted his natural and civil interests, when they were less consistent with the end of God and his prophetical office, and considered not his mother's house, and the vicinage in the accounts of religion, beyond those other places in which he might better do his Father's work: in which a forward piety might behold the insinuation of a duty to such persons, who, by rights of law and custom, were so far instrumental to the cure of souls, as to design the persons; they might do but duty if they first considered the interests of souls before the advantages of their kindred and relatives; and although, if all things else be alike, they may in equal dispositions prefer their own before strangers; yet it were but reason that they should first consider sadly if the men be equal, before they remember that they are of their

[a] Lib. de Baptis.

kindred, and not let this consideration be ingredient into the former judgment. And another degree of liberty yet there is; if our kindred be persons apt and holy, and without exceptions either of law, or prudence, or religion, we may do them advantages before others who have some degrees of learning and improvement beyond the other: or else no man might lawfully prefer his kindred, unless they were absolutely the ablest in a diocese or kingdom; which doctrine were a snare apt to produce scruples to the consciences, rather than advantages to the cure. But then also patrons should be careful, that they do not account their clerks by an estimate taken from comparison with unworthy candidates, set up on purpose, that when we choose our kindred we may abuse our consciences by saying, we have fulfilled our trust, and made election of the more worthy. In these and the like cases, let every man who is concerned deal with justice, nobleness, and sincerity, with the simplicity of a Christian and the wisdom of a man, without tricks and stratagems, to disadvantage the church by doing temporal advantages to his friend or family.

3. The blessed Master began his office with a sermon of repentance, as his decessor, John the Baptist, did in his ministration, to tell the world that the new covenant, which was to be established by the mediation and office of the holy Jesus, was a covenant of grace and favour, not established upon works, but upon promises, and remission of right on God's part, and remission of sins on our part. The law was "a covenant of works," and whoever prevaricated any of its sanctions in a considerable degree, he stood sentenced by it without any hopes of restitution supplied by the law. And therefore it was the "covenant of works;" not because good works were then required more than now, or because they had more efficacy than now; but because all our hopes did rely upon the perfection of works and innocence, without the suppletories of grace, pardon, and repentance. But the Gospel is therefore "a covenant of grace," not that works are excluded from our duty, or from co-operating to heaven; but that, because there is in it so much mercy, the imperfections of the works are made up by the grace of Jesus, and the defects of innocence are supplied by the substitution of repentance. Abatements are made for the infirmities and

miseries of humanity; and if we do our endeavour now, after the manner of men; the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, conformity to his laws, and submission to his doctrine, entitles us to the grace he hath purchased for us, that is, our sins for his sake shall be pardoned. So that the law and the Gospel are not opposed barely upon the title of faith and works, but as the "covenant of faith" and the "covenant of works." In the faith of a Christian, works are the great ingredient and the chief of the constitution, but the Gospel is not "a covenant of works," that is, it is not an agreement upon the stock of innocence without allowances of repentance, requiring obedience in rigour and strictest estimate. But the Gospel requires the holiness of a Christian, and yet after the manner of a man; for, always provided that we do not allow to ourselves a liberty, but endeavour with all our strength, and love with all our soul, that which, if it were upon our allowance, would be required at our hands, now that it is against our will, and highly contested against, is put upon the stock of Christ, and allowed to us by God in the accounts of pardon by the merits of Jesus, by the covenant of the Gospel. And this is the repentance and remission of sins which John first preached upon the approximation of the kingdom, and Christ at the first manifestation of it, and the apostles afterward in the name of Jesus.

4. Jesus now having begun his preaching, began also to gather his family; and first called Simon and Andrew, then James and John, at whose vocation he wrought a miracle, which was a signification of their office, and the success of it; a draught of fishes so great and prodigious, that it convinced them that he was a person very extraordinary, whose voice the fishes heard, and came at his call: and since he designed them to become "fishers of men," although themselves were as unlikely instruments to persuade men, as the voice of the Son of Man to command fishes, yet they should prevail in so great numbers, that the whole world should run after them, and, upon their summons, come into the net of the Gospel, becoming disciples of the glorious Nazarene. St. Peter, the first time that he threw his net, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecost, caught three thousand men; and at one sermon, sometimes the princes of a nation have been converted, and the whole land presently

baptized; and the multitudes so great, that the apostles were forced to design some men to the ministration of baptism by way of peculiar office; and it grew to be work enough, the easiness of the ministry being made busy and full of employment where a whole nation became disciples. And indeed the doctrine is so holy, the principle so Divine, the instruments so supernatural, the promises so glorious, the revelations so admirable, the rites so mysterious, the whole fabric of the discipline so full of wisdom, persuasion, and energy, that the infinite number of the first conversions were not so great a wonder, as that there are so few now: every man calling himself Christian, but few having that "power of godliness" which distinguishes Christian from a word and an empty name. And the word is now the same, and the arguments greater, (for some have been growing ever since, as the prophecies have been fulfilled,) and the sermons more, and "the Spirit the same;" and yet such "diversity of operations," that we hear and read the sermons and dictates evangelical as we do a romance, but that it is with less passion, but altogether as much unconcerned as with a story of Salmanasar or Ibrahim Bassa: for we do not leave one vice, or reject one lust, or deny one impetuous temptation the more, for the four Gospels' sake, and all St. Paul's epistles mingled in the argument. And yet all think themselves fishes within Christ's net, and the prey of the Gospel: and it is true they are so; for "the kingdom is like unto a net, which enclosed fishes good and bad;" but this shall be of small advantage when the net shall be drawn to the shore, and the separation made.

5. When Jesus called those disciples, they had been "fishing all night, and caught nothing;" but when Christ bade them "let down the net," they took multitudes: to show to us, that the success of our endeavours is not in proportion to our labours, but the Divine assistance and benediction. It is not the excellence of the instrument, but the capacity of the subject, nor yet this alone, but the aptness of the application, nor that without an influence from Heaven, can produce the fruits of a holy persuasion and conversion. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God gives the increase." Indeed, when we let down the nets at the Divine appointment, the success is the more

probable; and certainly God will bring benefit to the place, or honour to himself, or salvation to them that will obey, or conviction to them that will not: but whatever the fruit be in respect of others, the reward shall be great to themselves. And therefore St. Paul did not say he had profited, but, "he had laboured more than they all," as knowing the Divine acceptance would take its account in proportion to our endeavours and intendments; not by commensuration to the effect, which being without us, depending upon God's blessing, and the co-operation of the recipients, can be no ingredients into our account. But this also may help to support the weariness of our hopes, and the protraction and deferring of our expectation, if a laborious prelate and an assiduous preacher have but few returns to his many cares and greater labours. A whole night a man may labour, (the longest life is no other,) and yet catch nothing, and then the Lord may visit us with his special presence, and more forward assistances, and the harvest may grow up with the swiftness of a gourd, and the fruitfulness of olives, and the plaisance of the vine, and the strength of wheat; and whole troops of penitents may arise from the darkness of their graves at the call of one sermon, even when he pleases: and till then we must be content that we do our duty, and lay the consideration of the effect at the feet of Jesus.

6. In the days of the patriarchs, the governors of the Lord's people were called shepherds; so was Moses, and so was David. In the days of the Gospel they are shepherds still, but with the addition of a new appellative, for now they are called fishers. Both the callings were honest, humble, and laborious, watchful and full of trouble; but now that both the titles are conjunct, we may observe the symbol of an implicit and folded duty. There is much simplicity and care in the shepherd's trade; there is much craft and labour in the fisher's: and a prelate is to be both full of piety to his flock, careful of their welfare; and, because in the political and spiritual sense too, feeding and governing are the same duty, it concerns them that have cure of souls to be discreet and wary, observant of advantages, laying such baits for the people as may entice them into the nets of Jesus's discipline. "But being crafty I caught you," saith St. Paul; for he was a fisher too. And so must spiritual persons be fishers to all

spiritual senses of watchfulness, and care, and prudence: only they must not fish for preferment and ambitious purposes, but must say with the king of Sodom, "Date nobis animas, cætera vobis tollite;" which St. Paul renders, "We seek not yours, but you." And in order to such acquist, the purchase of souls, let them have the diligence and the craft of fishers, the watchfulness and care of shepherds, the prudence of politics, the tenderness of parents, the spirit of government, the wariness of observation, great knowledge of the dispositions of their people, and experience of such advantages by means of which they may serve the ends of God, and of salvation upon their souls.

7. When Peter had received the fruits of a rich miracle, in the prodigious and prosperous draught of fishes, he instantly "falls down at the feet of Jesus," and confesses himself "a sinner," and unworthy of the presence of Christ. In which confession I not only consider the conviction of his understanding by the testimony of the miracle, but the modesty of his spirit, who, in his exaltation, and the joy of a sudden and happy success, retired into humility and consideration of his own unworthiness, lest, as it happens in sudden joys, the lavishness of his spirit should transport him to intemperance, to looser affections, to vanity, and garishness, less becoming the severity and government of a disciple of so great a Master. For in such great and sudden accidents, men usually are dissolved and melted into joy and inconsideration, and let fly all their severe principles and discipline of manners, till, as Peter here did, though to another purpose, they say to Christ, "Depart from me, O Lord;" as if such excellences of joys, like the lesser stars, did disappear at the presence of him, who is the fountain of all joys regular and just. When the spirits of the body have been bound up by the cold winter air, the warmth of the spring makes so great an aperture of the passages, and, by consequence, such dissolution of spirits, in the presence of the sun, that it becomes the occasion of fevers and violent diseases. Just such a thing is a sudden joy, in which the spirits leap out from their cells of austerity and sobriety, and are warmed into fevers and wildnesses, and forfeiture of all judgment and vigorous understanding. In these accidents, the best advice is to temper and allay our joys with some

instant consideration of the vilest of our sins, the shamefulness of our disgraces, the most dolorous accidents of our lives, the worst of our fears, with meditation of death, or the terrors of doomsday, or the unimaginable miseries of damned and accursed spirits[b]. For such considerations as these are good instruments of sobriety, and are correctives to the malignity of excessive joys or temporal prosperities, which, like minerals, unless allayed by art, prey upon the spirits, and become the union of a contradiction, being turned into mortal medicines.

8. At this time "Jesus preached to the people from the ship," which, in the fancies and tropical discoursings of the old doctors, signifies the church, and declares, that the homilies of order and authority must be delivered from the oracle; they that preach must be sent, and God hath appointed tutors and instructors of our consciences by special designation and peculiar appointment: if they that preach do not make their sermons from the ship, their discourses either are the false murmurs of heretics and false shepherds, or else of thieves and invaders of authority, or corrupters of discipline and order. For God, that loves to hear us in special places, will also be heard himself by special persons; and since he sent his angels ministers to convey his purposes of old, then when "the law was ordained by angels, as by the hands of a mediator[c]," now also he will send his servants, the sons of men, since the new law was ordained by the Son of Man, who is the Mediator between God and man in the new covenant. And, therefore, in the ship Jesus preached, but he had first caused it "to put off from land;" to represent to us, that the ship in which we preach must be put off from the vulgar communities of men[d], separate from the people, by the designation of special appointment and of special holiness; that is, they neither must be common men, nor of common lives, but consecrated by order, and hallowed by holy living, lest the person want authority in destitution of a divine character, and his doctrine lose its energy and

[b] Simul et quod gaudes et quod times contrahe. — *Seneca.*

[c] Gal. iii. 19.

[d] Χωρεῖν γὰρ τὸ ὅμοιον πρὸς ὅμοιον, ὅθεν καὶ μόνος ἱερεὺς ὁ σοφὸς λέγεται, μόνος θεοφιλὴς, μόνος εὐδὲς εὐξασθαι· μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν, ὁ τὴν ἀξίαν μὴ συγχέων τῶν τιμωμένων, καὶ ὁ προσηγορικὸς ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων. — *Hierocl. in Pythag.*

power when the life is vulgar, and hath nothing in it holy and extraordinary.

9. The holy Jesus, in the choice of his apostles, was resolute and determined to make election of persons bold and confident, (for so the Galilæans were observed naturally to be, and Peter was the boldest of the twelve, and a good sword-man, till the spirit of his Master had fastened his sword within the scabbard, and charmed his spirit into quietness;) but he never chose any of the Scribes and Pharisees, none of the doctors of the law, but persons ignorant and unlearned; which, in design and institutions whose divinity is not demonstrated from other arguments, would seem an art of concealment and distrust. But in this, which derives its rays from the fountain of wisdom most openly and infallibly, it is a contestation against the powers of the world upon the interests of God, that he who does all the work might have all the glory, and in the productions in which he is fain to make the instruments themselves, and give them capacity and activity, every part of the operation, and causality, and effect, may give to God the same honour he had from the creation, for his being the only workman; with the addition of those degrees of excellence which, in the work of redemption of man, are beyond that of his creation and first being.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, Lord of the creatures, and Prince of the catholic church, to whom all creatures obey, in acknowledgment of thy supreme dominion, and all according to thy disposition, co-operate to the advancement of thy kingdom, be pleased to order the affairs and accidents of the world, that all things in their capacity may do the work of the Gospel, and co-operate to the good of the elect, and retrench the growth of vice, and advance the interests of virtue. Make all the states and orders of men disciples of thy holy institution: let princes worship thee, and defend religion; let thy clergy do thee honour by personal zeal, and vigilance over their flocks; let all the world submit to thy sceptre, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgments, and revere thy laws: and,

in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosure of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice, and obey thy call, and entertain thy Holy Spirit, and improve my talents; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore, and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom; but be admitted into the societies of saints, and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE IX.

Of Repentance.

1. THE whole doctrine of the Gospel is comprehended by the Holy Ghost in these two summaries, "faith and repentance[a];" that those two potent and imperious faculties, which command our lower powers, which are the fountain of actions, occasion and capacity of laws, and the title to reward or punishment, the will and the understanding, that is, the whole man considered in his superior faculties, may become the subjects of the kingdom, servants of Jesus, and heirs of glory. Faith supplies our imperfect conceptions, and corrects our ignorance, making us to distinguish good from evil, not only by the proportions of reason, and custom, and old laws, but by the new standard of the Gospel; it teaches us all those duties which were enjoined us in order to a participation of mighty glories; it brings our understanding into subjection, making us apt to receive the Spirit for our guide, Christ for our master, the Gospel for our rule, the laws of Christianity for our measure of good and evil: and it supposes us naturally ignorant, and comes to supply those defects which, in our understandings, were left after the spoils of innocence and wisdom made in paradise upon Adam's prevarication, and continued and increased by our

[a] Acts, xx. 21.

neglect, evil customs, voluntary deceptions, and infinite prejudices. And as faith presupposes our ignorance, so repentance presupposes our malice and iniquity. The whole design of Christ's coming, and the doctrines of the Gospel, being to recover us from a miserable condition, from ignorance to spiritual wisdom, by the conduct of faith; and from a vicious, habitually-depraved life, and ungodly manners, to the purity of the sons of God, by the instrument of repentance.

2. And this is a loud publication of the excellence and glories of the Gospel, and the felicities of man over all the other instances of creation. The angels, who were more excellent spirits than human souls, were not comprehended and made safe within a covenant and provisions of repentance. Their first act of volition was their whole capacity of a blissful or a miserable eternity: they made their own sentence when they made their first election; and having such excellent knowledge, and no weaknesses to prejudge and trouble their choice, what they first did was not capable of repentance; because they had at first, in their intuition and sight, all which could afterward bring them to repentance. But weak man, who knows first by elements, and, after long study, learns a syllable, and in good time gets a word, could not at first know all those things which were sufficient or apt to determine his choice, but as he grew to understand more, saw more reasons to rescind his first elections. The angels had a full peremptory will, and a satisfied understanding, at first, and therefore were not to mend their first act by a second contradictory: but poor man hath a will always strongest when his understanding is weakest, and chooseth most when he is least able to determine; and, therefore, is most passionate in his desires, and follows his object with greatest earnestness, when he is blindest, and hath the least reason so to do. And therefore God, pitying man, begins to reckon his choices to be criminal just in the same degree as he gives him understanding. The violences and unreasonable actions of childhood are no more remembered by God, than they are understood by the child. The levities and passions of youth are not aggravated by the imputation of malice, but are sins of a lighter dye, because reason is not yet impressed,

and marked upon them with characters and tincture in grain. But he who (when he may choose, because he understands) shall choose the evil, and reject the good, stands marked with a deep guilt, and hath no excuse left to him, but as his degrees of ignorance left his choice the more imperfect. And because every sinner, in the style of Scripture, is a fool, and hath an election as imperfect as is the action, that is, as great a declension from prudence as it is from piety, and the man understands as imperfectly as he practises: therefore, God sent his Son to "take upon him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham[b]," and to propound salvation upon such terms as were possible, that is, upon such a piety which relies upon experience, and trial of good and evil; and hath given us leave, if we choose amiss at first, to choose again, and choose better; Christ having undertaken to pay for the issues of their first follies, to make up the breach made by our first weaknesses and abused understandings.

3. But as God gave us this mercy by Christ, so he also revealed it by him. He first used the authority of a Lord, and a Creator, and a Lawgiver: he required obedience, indeed, upon reasonable terms, upon the instance of but a few commandments at first, which when he afterwards multiplied, he also appointed ways to expiate the smaller irregularities; but left them eternally bound without remedy, who should do any great violence or a crime. But then he bound them but to a temporal death. Only this, as an eternal death was also tacitly implied, so also a remedy was secretly ministered, and repentance particularly preached by homilies distinct from the covenant of Moses' law. The law allowed no repentance for greater crimes; "he that was convicted of adultery, was to die without mercy[c]:" but God pitied the miseries of man, and the inconveniences of the law, and sent Christ to suffer for the one, and remedy the other; "for so it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations[d]." And now this is the last and only hope of man, who, in his natural condition, is imperfect, in his customs vicious, in his habits

[b] Heb. ii. 16. [c] Lev. xx. 10. [d] Luke, xxiv. 46.

impotent and criminal. Because man did not remain innocent, it became necessary he should be penitent[e], and that this penitence should, by some means, be made acceptable, that is, become the instrument of his pardon, and restitution of his hope. Which, because it is an act of favour, and depends wholly upon the Divine dignation, and was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, who was made, not only the Prophet and Preacher, but the Mediator of this new covenant and mercy; it was necessary we should become disciples of the holy Jesus, and servants of his institution; that is, run to him to be made partakers of the mercies of this new covenant, and accept of him such conditions as he should require of us.

4. This covenant is then consigned to us when we first come to Christ, that is, when we first profess ourselves his disciples and his servants, disciples of his doctrine and servants of his institution; that is, in baptism, in which Christ, who died for our sins, makes us partakers of his death. "For we are buried by baptism into his death[f]," saith St. Paul. Which was also represented in ceremony by the immersion appointed to be the rite of that sacrament. And then it is that God pours forth, together with the sacramental waters, a salutary and holy fountain of grace, to wash the soul from all its stains and impure adherences. And, therefore, this first access to Christ is, in the style of Scripture, called "regeneration, the new birth, redemption, renovation, expiation, or atonement with God, and justification[g]." And these words in the New Testament relate principally and properly to the abolition of sins committed before baptism. For we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past: to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness." And this is that which St. Paul calls "justification by faith," that "boasting might

[e] Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos. — *Hor.* lib. i. od. 34.

[f] Rom. vi. 4.

[g] 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. v. 1. Tit. iii. 5, 7. Rom. iii. 26. Gal. ii. 16.

be excluded," and the grace of God by Jesus made exceeding glorious[h]. For this being the proper work of Christ, the first entertainment of a disciple, and manifestation of that state which is first given him as a favour, and next intended as a duty, is a total abolition of the precedent guilt of sin, and leaves nothing remaining that can condemn; we then freely receive the entire and perfect effect of that atonement which Christ made for us, we are put into a condition of innocence and favour. And this, I say, is done regularly in baptism, and St. Paul expresses it to this sense; after he had enumerated a series of vices subjected in many, he adds, "and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified[i]." There is nothing of the old guilt remanent; when "ye were washed ye were sanctified," or, as the Scripture calls it in another place, "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation[k]."

5. For this grace was the formality of the covenant: "Repent, and believe the Gospel[l]. Repent, and be converted," (so it is in St. Peter's sermon,) "and your sins shall be done away[m]," that was the covenant. But that Christ chose baptism for its signature, appears in the parallel: "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins: for Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish[n]." The sanctification is integral, the pardon is universal and immediate.

6. But here the process is short; no more at first but this, "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins[o];" which baptism, because it was speedily administered, and yet not without the preparatives of faith and repentance, it is certain those predispositions were but instruments of recep-

[h] Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. [i] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [k] 1 Pet. i. 18.
[l] Mark, i. 15. [m] Acts, iii. 19.
[n] Acts, ii. 38. Mark, xvi. 16. Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.
[o] *Φαίνεσθέ μοι ὀυ κατ' ἄνθρωπον ζῶντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ἀποθανόντα, ἵνα πιστεύσαντες εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος κοινωνοὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ γένησθε.* — *Ignat. ad Trall.*

Εἶσιν δὲ, δι' ὕδατος, καὶ πίστεως, καὶ ξύλου, οἱ σφραγισαμενοι, καὶ μετανοοῦντες ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτον, ἐφεύξονται τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπέρχεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ κρίσιν. — *Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph.*

tion, actions of great facility, of small employment, and such as, supposing the person not unapt[p], did confess the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and fulness of the redemption, and is called by the apostle, "a being justified freely[q]."

7. Upon this ground it is, that, by the doctrine of the church, heathen persons, "strangers from the covenant of grace," were invited to a confession of faith, and dereliction of false religions, with a promise, that, at the very first resignation of their persons to the service of Jesus, they should obtain full pardon[r]. It was St. Cyprian's counsel to old Demetrianus, "Now, in the evening of thy days, when thy soul is almost expiring, repent of thy sins, believe in Jesus, and turn Christian; and although thou art almost in the embraces of death, yet thou shalt be comprehended of immortality." "Baptizatus ad horam securus hinc exit," saith St. Austin; a baptized person dying immediately shall live eternally and gloriously. And this was the case of the thief upon the cross; he confessed Christ, and repented of his sins, and begged pardon, and did acts enough to facilitate his first access to Christ, and but to remove the hinderances of God's favour; then he was redeemed and reconciled to God by the death of Jesus, that is, he was pardoned with a full, instantaneous, integral, and clear pardon; with such a pardon which declared the glory of God's mercies, and the infiniteness of Christ's merits, and such as required a mere reception and entertainment on man's part.

8. But then we, having received so great a favour, enter into covenant to correspond with a proportionable endeavour; the benefit of absolute pardon, that is, salvation of our souls, being not to be received till "the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord[s]:" all the interval we have promised to live a holy life, in obedience to the whole discipline of Jesus. That is the condition on our part: and if we prevaricate that, the mercy shewn to the blessed thief

[p] Acts, viii. 37; x. 47; and xvi. 15, 33. [q] Rom. iii. 24.

[r] Eadem est ratio laborantium in vinea quos dominus in parabola, Matth. xx. undecimâ demum horâ conduxerat, omnes æqualem sortem promerebantur. Ratio autem est, quia antea vocati non erant: "Nemo nos conduxerat," verse 7. Θέλει δικαιοπραγῆσαι ὁ λῃστὴς, ἀλλὰ προλαμβάνει ὁ Σάωτης. Cui respondet Christus, Οὐ τὸ ἔργον περιμένω μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὴν πίστιν ἀναδέχομαι.—*Cyril. Hieros.*

[s] Acts, iii. 19.

is no argument of hope to us, because he was saved by the mercies of the first access, which corresponds to the remission of sins we receive in baptism; and we shall perish, by breaking our own promises and obligations, which Christ passed upon us when he made with us the covenant of an entire and gracious pardon[t].

9. For in the precise covenant there is nothing else described, but pardon so given and ascertained upon an obedience persevering to the end. And this is clear in all those places of Scripture which express a holy and innocent life to have been the purpose and design of Christ's death for us, and redemption of us from the former estate[u]. "Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed[x]." (Exinde,) from our being "healed," from our "dying unto sin," from our being "buried with Christ," from our being "baptized into his death;" the end of Christ's dying for us is, "that we should live unto righteousness." Which was also highly and prophetically expressed by St. Zacharias[y], in his divine ecstasy: this was "the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." And St. Paul[z] discourses to this purpose pertinently and largely: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, ("Hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus," saith Tertullian, "Those are the evil angels, the devil and his works, which we deny or renounce in baptism,") we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," that is, lead a whole life in the pursuit of universal holiness; sobriety, justice, and godliness, being the proper language to

[t] Licèt latro veniam meruisset in fine de omni suo crimine, non tamen dedit baptizatis peccandi et perseverandi auctoritatem. Tunc enim baptizatus est, qui tunc primùm Christum in cruce confessus est. Pœnitentia enim, si in extremo vitæ hiatu advenerit, sanat et liberat in ablutione baptismi. Illi autem qui, cùm potuerunt, nunquam converti voluerùnt, confitentes cùm jam peccare nequeunt, non sic facilè acquirunt quod volunt.—*S. Aug. cap. Nullus de Pœnit. dist.* 7.

[u] Vide Part III. Consid. of Crucifix. of Jesus.

[x] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [y] Luke, i. 73, &c. [z] Titus, ii. 11, 12.

signify our religion and respects to God, to our neighbours, and to ourselves. And that this was the very end of our dying in baptism, and the design of Christ's manifestation of our redemption, he adds[a], "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus, who gave himself for us," to this very purpose, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Purifying a people peculiar to himself, is cleansing it in the laver of regeneration, and appropriating it to himself in the rites of admission and profession. Which plainly designs the first consignation of our redemption to be in baptism, and that Christ, there cleansing his church "from every spot or wrinkle," made a covenant with us, that we should renounce all our sins, and he should cleanse them all, and then that we should abide in that state. Which is also very explicitly set down by the same apostle, in that divine and mysterious epistle to the Romans[b]: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" Well, what then? "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That is the end and mysteriousness of baptism; it is a consignation into the death of Christ, and we die with him that once; that is, die to sin, that we may for ever after live the life of righteousness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin[c];" that is, from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. And therefore God, who knows the weaknesses on our part, and yet the strictness and necessity of conserving baptismal grace by the covenant evangelical, hath appointed the auxiliaries of the Holy Spirit to be ministered to all baptized people in the holy rite of confirmation, that it might be made possible to be done by Divine aids, which is necessary to be done by the Divine commandments.

10. And this might not be improperly said to be the meaning of those words of our blessed Saviour, "He that

[a] Titus, ii. 13, 14. [b] Rom. vi. 2, 3, 4. [c] Ib. v. 6.

speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him:" that is, those sins which were committed in infidelity, before we became disciples of the holy Jesus, are to be remitted in baptism and our first profession of the religion; but the sins committed after baptism and confirmation, in which we receive the Holy Ghost, and by which the Holy Spirit is grieved, are to be accounted for with more severity. And therefore the primitive church[d], understanding our obligations according to this discourse, admitted not any to holy orders who had lapsed and fallen into any sin of which she could take cognizance, that is, such who had not kept the integrity of their baptism; but sins committed before baptism were no impediments to the susception of orders, because they were absolutely extinguished in baptism. This is the nature of the covenant we made in baptism, that is, the grace of the Gospel, and the effect of faith and repentance; and it is expected we should so remain. For it is nowhere expressed to be the mercy and intention of the covenant evangelical, that this redemption should be any more than once, or that repentance, which is in order to it, can be renewed to the same, or so great purposes and present effects.

11. But after we are once reconciled in baptism, and put entirely into God's favour, when we have once been redeemed[e], if we then fall away into sin, we must expect God's dealing with us in another manner, and to other purposes. Never must we expect to be so again justified, and upon such terms as formerly; the best days of our repentance are interrupted: not that God will never forgive them that sin after baptism, and recover by repentance; but that restitution by repentance after baptism, is another thing than the first redemption. No such entire, clear, and integral, determi-

[d] Vitia catechumeno non imputantur fideli, imò et polygamia ante baptismum sacerdotibus non ponebat obicem.—*S. Hieron. in fin. Apol. I. contra Ruffin.*

De sacramento enim agitur, non de peccato.—*S. Aug. de Bono Conjugali.*

Nam in baptismo omnia peccata dimittuntur.—*Can. Apost.* 17. *Concil. Eliber.* cap. 30, 31.

Mundus post diluvium rursus delinquens igni destinatur: sicut et homo qui post baptismum delicta restaurat,—*Tertul. de Baptis.*

[e] Nunc hic dies aliam vitam adfert, alios mores postulat.

nate, and presential effects of repentance; but an imperfect, little, growing, uncertain, and hazardous reconciliation: a repentance that is always in production, a renovation by parts, a pardon that is revocable, a "salvation" to be "wrought by fear and trembling:" all our remanent life must be in bitterness, our hopes allayed with fears, our meat attempered with coloquintida, and "death is in the pot:" as our best actions are imperfect, so our greatest graces are but possibilities and aptnesses to a reconcilement, and all our life we are working ourselves into that condition we had in baptism, and lost by our relapse. As the habit lessens, so does the guilt; as our virtues are imperfect, so is the pardon; and because our piety may be interrupted, our state is uncertain[f], till our possibilities of sin are ceased, till our "fight is finished," and the victory therefore made sure because there is no more fight. And it is remarkable, that St. Peter gives counsel to live holily, in pursuance of our redemption, of our calling, and of our "escaping from that corruption that is in the world through lust," lest we lose the benefit of our purgation, to which, by way of antithesis, he opposes this: "Wherefore the rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure." And, "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall[g]." Meaning, by the perpetuating our state of baptism and first repentance we shall never fall, but be in a sure estate; "our calling and election shall be sure[h]." But not, if we fall; "if we forget we were purged from our old sins[i];" if we forfeit our "calling," we have also made our "election" unsure, moveable, and disputable.

12. So that now the hopes of lapsed sinners rely upon another bottom. And, as in Moses' law there was no revelation of repentance, but yet the Jews had hopes in God, and were taught the succours of repentance by the homilies of the prophets, and other accessory notices: so in the Gospel the covenant was established upon faith and repentance, but it was consigned in baptism, and was verifiable only in the integrity of a following holy life according to the measures of a man; not perfect, but sincere; not faultless, but heartily endeavoured: but yet the mercies of God, in pardoning

[f] Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera felix.
[g] 2 Pet. i. 4, 10. [h] Vide etiam Col. i. 21, 22, 23.
[i] 2 Pet. i. 9.

sinners lapsed after baptism, was declared to us by collateral and indirect occasions; by the sermons of the apostles, and the commentaries of apostolical persons, who understood the meaning of the Spirit, and the purposes of the Divine mercy, and those other significations of his will, which the blessed Jesus left upon record in other parts of his testament, as in codicils annexed, besides the precise testament itself. And it is certain, if, in the covenant of grace, there be the same involution of an after-repentance, as there is of present pardon upon past repentance and future sanctity, it is impossible to justify, that a holy life, and a persevering sanctity, is enjoined by the covenant of the Gospel: if, I say, in its first intention, it be declared that we may as well, and upon the same terms, hope for pardon upon a recovery hereafter, as upon the perseverance in the present condition.

13. From these premises, we may soon understand what is the duty of a Christian in all his life, even to pursue his own undertaking made in baptism, or his first access to Christ, and redemption of his person from the guilt and punishment of sins. The state of a Christian is called in Scripture "regeneration, spiritual life, walking after the Spirit, walking in newness of life;" that is, "a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance." That repentance, which, tied up in the same ligament with faith, was the disposition of a Christian to his regeneration and atonement, must have holy life in perpetual succession; for that is the apt and proper fruit of the first repentance which John the Baptist preached as an introduction to Christianity, and as an entertaining the redemption by the blood of the covenant. And all that is spoken in the New Testament is nothing but a calling upon us to do what we promised in our regeneration, to perform that which was the design of Christ, who therefore redeemed us, and "bare our sins in his own body, that we might die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."

14. This is that saying of St. Paul[k], "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you." Plainly saying, that unless we pursue the state of holiness

[k] Heb. xii. 14, 15.

and Christian communion, into which we were baptized when we received the grace of God, we shall fail of the state of grace, and never come to see the glories of the Lord. And a little before, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water[l]." That is the first state of our redemption, that is "the covenant God made with us, to remember our sins no more, and to put his laws in our hearts and minds[m]." And this was done "when our bodies were washed with water, and our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," that is, in baptism. It remains then that we persist in the condition, that we may continue our title to the covenant; for so it follows, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: for if we sin wilfully after the profession, there remains no more sacrifice[n]:" that is, if we hold not fast the profession of our faith, and continue not the condition of the covenant, but fall into a contrary state, we have forfeited the mercies of the covenant. So that all our hopes of blessedness, relying upon the covenant made with God in Jesus Christ, are ascertained upon us by "holding fast that profession," by retaining "our hearts" still "sprinkled from an evil conscience," by "following peace with all men, and holiness:" for, by not "failing of the grace of God," we shall not fail of our hopes, "the mighty price of our high calling;" but without all this, we shall never see the face of God.

15. To the same purpose are all those places of Scripture, which entitle us to Christ and the Spirit upon no other condition but a holy life, and a prevailing, habitual, victorious grace. "Know you not your ownselves," brethren, "how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates[o]?" There are but two states of being in order to eternity, either a state of the inhabitation of Christ, or the state of reprobation: either "Christ is in us," or we "are reprobates." But what does that signify, to have "Christ dwelling in us?" That also we learn at the feet of the same doctor: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness[p]." The body of sin is mortified,

[l] Heb. x. 22. [m] Ver. 16, 17. [n] Heb. x. 23, 26.
[o] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [p] Rom. viii. 10.

and the life of grace is active, busy, and spiritual, in all them who are not in the state of reprobation. The parallel with that other expression of his: "They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts[q]." If sin be vigorous, if it be habitual, if it be beloved, if it be not dead or dying in us, we are not of Christ's portion, we belong not to him, nor he to us. For "whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God[r]:" that is, every regenerate person is in a condition, whose very being is a contradiction and an opposite design to sin. When he was regenerate, and born anew "of water and the Spirit, the seed of God," the original of piety, was put into him, and bidden to "increase and multiply." "The seed of God" (in St. John) is the same with "the word" of God (in St. James), "by which he begat us[s];" and as long as this remains, a regenerate person cannot be given up to sin; for when he is, he quits his baptism, he renounces the covenant, he alters his relation to God in the same degree as he enters into a state of sin.

16. And yet this discourse is no otherwise to be understood than according to the design of the thing itself and the purpose of God; that is, that it be a deep engagement and an effectual consideration for the necessity of a holy life: but at no hand let it be made an instrument of despair, nor an argument to lessen the influences of the Divine mercy. For although the nicety and limits of the covenant, being consigned in baptism, are fixed upon the condition of a holy and persevering uninterrupted sanctity; and our redemption is wrought but once, completed but once, we are but once absolutely, entirely, and presentially forgiven, and reconciled to God, this reconciliation being in virtue of the sacrifice, and this sacrifice applied in baptism is one, as "baptism is one," and as the sacrifice is one: yet the mercy of God, besides this great feast, hath fragments, which the apostles and ministers spiritual are to gather up in baskets, and minister to the after-needs of indigent and necessitous disciples.

17. And this we gather, as fragments are gathered, by respersed sayings, instances and examples of the Divine

[q] Gal. v. 24. [r] 1 John, iii. 9. [s] James, i. 18.

mercy recorded in holy Scripture. The holy Jesus commands us to "forgive our brother seventy times seven times," when he asks our pardon and implores our mercy; and since the Divine mercy is the pattern of ours, and is also procured by ours, the one being made the measure of the other, by way of precedent and by way of reward, God will certainly forgive us as we forgive our brother: and it cannot be imagined God should oblige us to give pardon oftener than he will give it himself, especially since he hath expressed ours to be a title of a proportionable reception of his; and hath also commanded us to ask pardon all days of our life, even in our daily offices, and to beg it in the measure and rule of our own charity and forgiveness to our brother. And therefore God, in his infinite wisdom, foreseeing our frequent relapses, and considering our infinite infirmities, appointed in his church an ordinary ministry of pardon: designing the minister to pray for sinners, and promising to accept him in that his advocation, or that he would open or shut heaven respectively to his act on earth; that is, he would hear his prayers, and verify his ministry, to whom he hath "committed the word of reconciliation." This became a duty to Christian ministers, spiritual persons, that they should "restore a person overtaken in a fault[t]," that is, reduce him to the condition he begins to lose; that they should "pray over sick persons[u]," who are also commanded to "confess their sins;" and God hath promised, that "the sins they have committed shall be forgiven them." Thus St. Paul absolved the incestuous, excommunicate Corinthian; in the person of Christ he forgave him[x]. And this, also, is the confidence St. John taught the Christian church, upon the stock of the excellent mercy of God, and propitiation of Jesus: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness[y]." Which discourse he directs to them who were Christians, already initiated into the institution of Jesus. And the epistles which

[t] Gal. vi. 1. [u] James, v. 14.

[x] Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος ἢ πρεσβύτερος τὸν ἐπιστηρίσοντα ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας οὐ προσδέχεται, ἀλλὰ ἀποβάλλεται, παιδαιρόδῳ, ὅτι λυπεῖ Χριστὸν τὸν εἰπόντα, Χαρὰ γίνεται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐπὶ ἑνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι. — *Can. Apost.* 51.

Ὁ πιστεύων παρὰ Θεοῦ λύειν καὶ δεσμεῖν, εἰ φιλανθρωπότερος γένοιτο, οἷα ἔστιν καταγνώστου ἄξιος. — *S. Basil. Can. Pœnit.*

[y] 1 John, i. 9.

the Spirit sent to the seven Asian churches, and were particularly addressed to the bishops, the angels, of those churches, are exhortations, some to perseverance, some to repentance, that "they may return from whence they are fallen[z]." And the case is so with us, that it is impossible we should be actually and perpetually free from sin, in the long succession of a busy, and impotent, and a tempted conversation. And without these reserves of the Divine grace, and after-emanations from the mercy-seat, no man could be saved; and the death of Christ would become inconsiderable to most of his greatest purposes: for none should have received advantages but newly-baptized persons, whose albs of baptism served them also for a winding-sheet. And, therefore, our baptism, although it does consign the work of God presently to the baptized person in great, certain, and entire effect, in order to the remission of what is past, in case the catechumen be rightly disposed, or hinders not; yet it hath also influence upon the following periods of our life, and hath admitted us into a lasting state of pardon, to be renewed and actually applied by the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and all other ministries evangelical, and so long as our repentance is timely, active, and effective[a].

18. But now, although it is infinitely certain, that the gates of mercy stand open to sinners after baptism; yet it is with some variety, and greater difficulty. He that renounces Christianity, and becomes apostate from his religion, not by a seeming abjuration under a storm, but by a voluntary and hearty dereliction, he seems to have quitted all that grace which he had received when he was illuminated, and to have lost the benefits of his redemption and former expiation. And I conceive this is the full meaning of those words of St. Paul, which are of highest difficulty and latent sense; "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," &c. "if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance[b]." The reason is there subjoined, and more clearly explicated a little after: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins; for he hath counted the blood of the

[z] Apocal. ii. 5. [a] See Discourse vi. of Baptism. [b] Heb. vi. 4, 6.

covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace[c]." The meaning is diverse, according to the degrees of apostacy or relapse. They who fall away after they were once enlightened in baptism[d], and felt all those blessed effects of the sanctification and the emanations of the Spirit, if it be into a contradictory state of sin and mancipation, and obstinate purposes to serve Christ's enemies; then "there remains nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment:" but if the backsliding be but the interruption of the first sanctity by a single act, or an unconformed, unresolved, unmalicious habit; then, also, "it is impossible to renew them unto repentance," viz. as formerly; that is, they can never be reconciled as before, integrally, fully, and at once, during this life. For that redemption and expiation was by baptism, into Christ's death; and there are no more deaths of Christ, nor any more such sacramental consignations of the benefit of it; "there is no more sacrifice for sins," but the redemption is one, as the sacrifice is one in whose virtue the redemption does operate. And, therefore, the Novatians, who were zealous men, denied to the first sort of persons the peace of the church, and remitted them to the Divine judgment. The church[e] herself was sometimes almost as zealous against the second sort of persons lapsed into capital crimes, granting to them repentance but once; by such disciplines consigning this truth, That every recession from the state of grace, in which by baptism we were established and consigned, is a farther step from the possibilities of heaven, and so near a ruin, that the church thought them persons fit to be transmitted to a judicature immediately Divine; as supposing either her power to be too little, or the other's malice too great; or else the danger too violent, or the scandal insupportable. For concerning such persons,

[c] Heb. x. 26, 29.

[d] Quid igitur? rejecta est pœnitentia? Haudquaquam: sed renovatio per novum baptisma rejecta est. Renovatio namque solius lavacri est; ex hac causa ab apostolo dicitur lavacrum regenerationis et renovationis Spiritûs Sancti. — *Theophyl. in hunc locum.*

Idem aiunt S. Chrys. Ambros. Anselm. in 10. Heb.

[e] Collocavit in vestibulo pœnitentiam secundam quæ pulsantibus patefaciat, sed jam semel, quia jam secundò; sed ampliùs nunquam, quia proximè frustra. Hujus igitur pœnitentiæ secundæ et unius, &c. — *Tertul. lib. de Pœnit.* c. 7, 9.

who once were pious, holy, and forgiven, (for so is every man and woman worthily and aptly baptized,) and afterwards fell into dissolution of manners, "extinguishing the Holy Ghost, doing despite to the Spirit of grace, crucifying again the Lord of life;" that is, returning to such a condition from which they were once recovered, and could not otherwise be so but by the death of our dearest Lord; I say, concerning such persons the Scripture speaks very suspiciously, and to the sense and signification of an infinite danger. For if the speaking a word "against the Holy Ghost be not to be pardoned, here nor hereafter," what can we imagine to be the end of such an impiety, which "crucifies the Lord of life, and puts him to an open shame;" which "quenches the Spirit, doing despite to the Spirit of grace?" Certainly that is worse than speaking against him. And such is every person who falls into wilful apostacy from the faith, or does that violence to holiness which the other does to faith; that is, extinguishes the sparks of illumination, "quenches the Spirit," and is habitually and obstinately criminal in any kind. For the same thing that atheism was, in the first period of the world, and idolatry in the second, the same is apostacy in the last; it is a state wholly contradictory to all our religious relation to God, according to the nature and manner of the present communication. Only this last, because it is more malicious, and a declension from a greater grace, is something like the fall of angels. And of this the emperor Julian was a sad example.

19. But as these are degrees immediately next, and a little less; so the hopes of pardon are the more visible. Simon Magus spake a word, or at least thought, against the Holy Ghost; he "thought he was to be bought with money." Concerning him, St. Peter pronounced, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity: yet repent, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee[f]." Here the matter was of great difficulty; but yet there was a possibility left, at least no impossibility of recovery declared. And therefore St. Jude bids us, "of some to have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire[g]:" meaning, that

[f] Acts, viii. 22, 23. [g] Ver. 22, 23.

their condition is only not desperate. And still in descent, retaining the same proportion, every lesser sin is easier pardoned, as better consisting with the state of grace: the whole Spirit is not destroyed, and the body of sin is not introduced: Christ is not quite ejected out of possession, but, like an oppressed prince, still continues his claim; and such is his mercy, that he will still do so, till all be lost, or that he is provoked by too much violence, or that antichrist is put in substitution, and "sin reigns in our mortal body." So that I may use the words of St. John: "These things I write unto you, that you sin not. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous: and he is a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world[h]." That is plainly, Although the design of the Gospel be, that we should erect a throne for Christ to reign in our spirits, and this doctrine of innocence be therefore preached, that ye sin not; yet if one be overtaken in a fault, despair not; Christ is our Advocate, and he is the propitiation: he did propitiate the Father by his death, and the benefit of that we receive at our first access to him; but then he is our Advocate too, and prays perpetually for our perseverance or restitution respectively. But his purpose is, and he is able so to do, "to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory."

20. This consideration I intend should relate to all Christians of the world: and although, by the present custom of the church, we are baptized in our infancy, and do not actually reap that fruit of present pardon, which persons of a mature age in the primitive church did, (for we yet need it not, as we shall when we have past the calentures of youth, which was the time in which the wisest of our fathers in Christ chose for their baptism, as appears in the instance of St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and divers others;) yet we must remember, that there is a baptism of the Spirit as well as of water: and whenever this happens, whether it be together with that baptism of water, as usually it was when only men and women of years of discretion were baptized; or whether it be ministered in the rite of confirmation, which is an admirable suppletory of an early baptism, and intended by the

[h] 1 John, ii. 1, 2.

Holy Ghost for a corroborative of baptismal grace, and a defensative against danger; or that, lastly, it be performed by an internal and merely spiritual ministry, when we, by acts of our own election, verify the promise made in baptism, and so bring back the rite, by receiving the effect of baptism; that is, whenever the "filth of our flesh is washed away," and that we have "the answer of a pure conscience towards God," which St. Peter affirms to be the true baptism, and which, by the purpose and design of God, it is expected we should not defer longer than a great reason or a great necessity enforces; when our sins are first expiated, and the sacrifice and death of Christ is made ours, and we made God's by a more immediate title, (which at some time or other happens to all Christians, that pretend to any hopes of heaven:) then let us look to our standing, and "take heed lest we fall. When we once have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," that is, when we are redeemed by an actual mercy and presential application, which every Christian that belongs to God is at some time or other of his life; then a fall into a deadly crime is highly dangerous, but a relapse into a contrary estate is next to desperate.

21. I represent this sad, but most true doctrine, in the words of St. Peter: "If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them[l]." So that a relapse, after a state of grace, into a state of sin, into confirmed habits, is to us a great sign, and possibly in itself it is more than a sign, even a state, of reprobation and final abscission[k].

22. The sum of all is this. There are two states of like opposite terms. First, "Christ redeems us from our vain

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

[k] —— Neque amissos colores
Lana refert medicata fuco:
Nec vera virtus, cùm semel excidit,
Curat reponi deterioribus. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 5.

conversation," and reconciles us to God, putting us into an entire condition of pardon, favour, innocence, and acceptance; and becomes our Lord and King, his Spirit dwelling and reigning in us. The opposite state to this, is that which in Scripture is called a "crucifying the Lord of life, a doing despite to the Spirit of grace, a being entangled in the pollutions of the world;" the apostacy, or falling away; an impotency, or disability to do good, viz. of such who "cannot cease from sin[1];" who are slaves of sin, and in whom "sin reigns in their bodies." This condition is a full and integral deletery of the first; it is such a condition, which, as it hath no holiness or remanent affections to virtue, so it hath no hope or revelation of a mercy, because all that benefit is lost which they received by the death of Christ; and the first being lost, "there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment." But between these two states, stand all those imperfections and single delinquencies, those slips and falls, those parts of recession and apostacy, those grievings of the Spirit: and so long as any thing of the first state is left, so long we are within the covenant of grace, so long we are within the ordinary limits of mercy and the Divine compassion; we are in possibilities of recovery, and the same sacrifice of Christ hath its power over us; Christ is in his possession, though he be disturbed: but then our restitution consists upon the only condition of a renovation of our integrity; as are the degrees of our innocence, so are our degrees of confidence.

23. Now, because the intermedial state is divisible, various, successive, and alterable; so also is our condition of pardon. Our flesh shall no more return as that of a little child; our wounds shall never be perfectly cured; but a scar, and pain, and danger of a relapse, shall for ever afflict us; our sins shall be pardoned by parts and degrees, to uncertain purposes, but with certain danger of being recalled again; and the pardon shall never be consummate, till that day in which all things have their consummation.

24. And this is evident to have been God's usual dealing with all those upon whom his name is called. God pardoned David's sins of adultery and murder; but the pardon was but to a certain degree, and in a limited expression: "God hath

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 14.

taken away thy sin; thou shalt not die." But this pardon was as imperfect as his condition was: "Nevertheless, the child that is born unto thee, that shall die[m]." Thus God pardoned the Israelites, at the importunity of Moses, and yet threatened to visit that sin upon them in the day of visitation. And so it is in Christianity: when once we have broken and discomposed the golden chain of vocation, election, and justification, which are entire links and methodical periods of our happiness, when we first give up our names to Christ, for ever after our condition is imperfect; we have broken our covenant, and we must be saved by the excrescences and overflowings of mercy. Our whole endeavour must be, to be reduced to the state of our baptismal innocence and integrity, because in that the covenant was established. And since our life is full of defailances, and all our endeavours can never make us such as Christ made us, and yet upon that condition our hopes of happiness were established; I mean, of remaining such as he had made us: as are the degrees of our restitution and access to the first federal condition, so also are the degrees of our pardon. But as it is always in imperfection during this life, and subject to change and defailance; so also are the hopes of our felicity; never certain, till we are taken from all danger; never perfect, till all that is imperfect in us is done away[n].

25. And, therefore, in the present condition of things, our pardon was properly expressed by David, and St. Paul, by "a covering[o]," and "a not imputing[p]." For because the body of sin dies divisibly, and fights perpetually, and disputes with hopes of victory, and may also prevail, all this life is a condition of suspense; our sin is rather covered, than properly pardoned; God's wrath is suspended, not satisfied; the sin is not to all purposes of anger imputed, but yet is in some sense remanent, or at least lies ready at the door. Our condition is a state of imperfection; and every degree of imperfection brings a degree of recession from the state Christ put us in; and every recession from our innocence is also an abatement of our confidence; the anger of God hovers over our head, and breaks out into temporal judgments; and he

[m] 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.

[n] Μάτην μέγαν εἶπας περὶ τελευτήσαντ' ἴδης. — *Sophocl.*

[o] Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. [p] Rom. iv. 7.

retracts them again, and threatens worse, according as we approach to or retire from that first innocence, which was the first entertainment of a Christian, and the crown of the evangelical covenant. Upon that we entertained the mercies of redemption; and God established it upon such an obedience, which is a constant, perpetual, and universal sincerity and endeavour: and as we perform our part, so God verifies his, and not only gives a great assistance by the perpetual influences of his Holy Spirit, by which we are consigned to the day of redemption, but also takes an account of obedience, not according to the standard of the law and an exact scrutiny, but by an evangelical proportion; in which we are, on one side, looked upon as persons already redeemed and assisted, and therefore highly engaged; and on the other side as compassed about with infirmities and enemies, and therefore much pitied. So that, as at first, our "calling and election" is presently good, and shall remain so, if we make it sure; so if we once prevaricate it, we are rendered then full of hazard, difficulty, and uncertainty, and we must, with pains and sedulity, "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" first, by preventing a fall; or afterwards, by returning to that excellent condition from whence we have departed.

26. But although the pardon of sins after baptism be, during this life, difficult, imperfect, and revocable; yet because it is to great effects for the present, and in order to a complete pardon in the day of judgment, we are next to inquire, what are the parts of duty to which we are obliged, after such prevarications which usually interrupt the state of baptismal innocence, and the life of the Spirit. St. John gives this account: "If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have communion one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin.[q]" This state of duty St. Paul calls, "a casting off the works of darkness, a putting on the armour of light, a walking honestly, a putting on the Lord Jesus Christ[r]." And to it he confronts, "making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." St. Peter, describing the duty of a Christian, relates the proportion of it as high as the first precedent,

[q] 1 John, i. 6, 7. [r] Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14.

even God himself: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, in all manner of conversation: not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts[s]." And again: "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness[t]?" And St. John, with the same severity and perfection: "Every one that hath this hope," (that is, every one who either does not, or hath no reason to despair,) "purifieth himself, even as God is pure[u];" meaning, that he is pure by a divine purity, which God hath prescribed as an imitation of his holiness, according to our capacities and possibilities. That purity must needs be a "laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings[x];" so St. Peter expresses it: "a laying aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset us[y];" so St. Paul. This is to "walk in the light, as he is in the light, for in him is no darkness at all[z];" which we have then imitated, when we have "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts[a];" that is, so as we are "not held by them," that we take them for our enemies, for the object and party of our contestation and spiritual fight, "when we contend earnestly" against them, "and resist them unto blood," if need be; that is, being "pure, as he is pure." But besides this positive rejection of all evil, and perpetually contesting against sin, we must pursue the interests of virtue and an active religion.

27. "And besides this," saith St. Peter, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity[b]." All this is an evident prosecution of the first design, the holiness and righteousness of a whole life; the being clear from all spots and blemishes, a being pure, and so presented unto Christ: for upon this the covenant being founded, to this all industries

[s] 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. [t] 2 Pet. iii. 11. [u] 1 John, iii. 3.
[x] 1 Pet. ii. 1. [y] Heb. xii. 1. [z] 1 John, i. 5, 7.
[a] 2 Pet. i. 4. [b] Ibid. ver. 5, &c.

Veri boni avidltas tuta est. Quid sit istud, interrogas, aut unde subeat? dicam: ex bona conscientia, ex honestis consiliis, ex rectis actionibus, ex contemptu fortuitorum, ex placido vitæ et continuo tenore unam prementis viam.—*Sen. ep.* 23.

must endeavour, and arrive in their proportions. "For if these things be in you and abound, they shall make that you be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins[c];" that is, he hath lost his baptismal grace, and is put from the first state of his redemption, towards that state which is contradictory and destructive of it.

28. Now, because all these things are in latitude, distance, and divisibility, and only enjoin a sedulity and great endeavour, all that we can dwell upon is this, That he who endeavours most is most secure, and every degree of negligence is a degree of danger; and although in the intermedial condition, between the two states of Christianity and a full impiety, there is a state of recovery and possibility, yet there is danger in every part of it; and it increases, according as the deflexion and irregularity comes to its height, position, state, and finality. So that we must "give all diligence to work out our salvation," and it would ever be "with fear and trembling:" with fear, that we do not lose our innocence; and with trembling, if we have lost it, for fear we never recover, or never be accepted. But holiness of life and uninterrupted sanctity, being the condition of our salvation, the ingredient of the covenant, we must proportion our degrees of hope, and confidence of heaven, according as we have obtained degrees of innocence, or perseverance, or restitution. Only this: as it is certain he is in a state of reprobation, who lives unto sin, that is, whose actions are habitually criminal, who gives more of his consent to wickedness than to virtue: so it is also certain he is not in the state of God's favour and sanctification, unless he lives unto righteousness; that is, whose desires, and purposes, and endeavours, and actions, and customs, are spiritual, holy, sanctified, and obedient. When sin is dead, and the Spirit is life; when the lusts of the flesh are mortified, and the heart is purged from an evil conscience, and we abound in a whole system of Christian virtues; when our hearts are right to God, and with our affections and our wills we love God, and keep his commandments; when we do not only "cry Lord, Lord," but also

[c] 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.

" do his will;" then " Christ dwells in us," and we in Christ. Now let all this be taken in the lowest sense that can be imagined, all I say, which out of Scripture I have transcribed; " casting away every weight, laying aside all malice, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, crucifying the old man with all his affections and lusts, and then having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," besides this, " adding virtue to virtue till all righteousness be fulfilled in us, walking in the light, putting on the Lord Jesus, purifying ourselves as God is pure, following peace with all men, and holiness, resisting unto blood, living in the Spirit, being holy in all manner of conversation as he is holy, being careful and excellent in all conversation and godliness," all this, being a pursuit of the first design of Christ's death, and our reconcilement, can mean no less but that, 1. We should have in us no affection to a sin; of which we can best judge, when we never choose it, and never fall under it but by surprise, and never lie under it at all, but instantly recover, judging ourselves severely: and, 2. That we should choose virtue with great freedom of spirit and alacrity, and pursue it earnestly, integrally [d], and make it the business of our lives [e]: and that, 3. The effect of this be, that sin be crucified in us, and the desires to it dead, flat, and useless; and that our desires of serving Christ be quick-spirited, active, and effective, inquisitive for opportunities, apprehensive of the offer, cheerful in the action, and persevering in the employment.

29. Now let a prudent person imagine what infirmities and oversights can consist with a state thus described, and all that does no violence to the covenant; God pities us, and calls us not to an account for what morally cannot, or certainly will not, with great industry, be prevented [f]. But whatsoever is inconsistent with this condition is an abatement from our hopes, as it is a retiring from our duty, and

[d] Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu peculiari.

[e] Χρόνος δίκαιον ἄνδρα δείκνυσιν μόνος·
Κακὸν δὲ κἂν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γνοίης μιᾷ.—*Sophocl. Oed. Tyr.*

[f] Illud enim esset, (*quod apud Diodorum Siculum,*) Τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καὶ κοινῆς ἀσθενείας ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι, ἵως ἄν τις ἀναμαρτήτους καλάζῃ, τὸ μέτρον ὑπερβαίνει τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐπανορθώσεως. Sopater dixit dissimulanda τὰ μικρὰ καὶ συνήθη τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων. Malè hoc; nisi in quantum vitari non possunt.

is, with greater or less difficulty, cured, as are the degrees of its distance from that condition which Christ stipulated with us, when we became his disciples. For we are just so restored to our state of grace and favour, as we are restored to our state of purity and holiness. Now this redintegration, or renewing of us into the first condition, is also called repentance, and is permitted to all persons who still remain within the powers and possibilities of the covenant, that is, who are not in a state contradictory to the state and portion of grace; but with a difficulty increased by all circumstances, and incidences, of the crime and person. And this I shall best represent in repeating these considerations: 1. Some sins are past hopes of pardon in this life; 2. All that are pardoned are pardoned by parts, revocably and imperfectly during this life, not quickly, nor yet manifestly; 3. Repentance contains in it many operations, parts, and employments, its terms and purpose being to redintegrate our lost condition, that is, in a second and less perfect sense, but, as much as in such circumstances we can, to verify our first obligations of innocence and holiness, in all manner of conversation and godliness.

30. Concerning the first, it is too sad a consideration to be too dogmatical and conclusive in it; and, therefore, I shall only recall those expresses of Scripture which may, without envy, decree the article: such as are those of St. Paul, that there is a certain sort of men, whom he twice describes, whom "it is impossible to renew again unto repentance;" or those of St. Peter, such whose "latter end is worse than the beginning, because, after they once had escaped the pollutions of the world, they are entangled therein;" such who, as our blessed Saviour threatens, "shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come." For there is an unpardonable estate, by reason of its malice and opposition to the covenant of grace; and there is a state unpardonable, because the time of repentance is past. There are days and periods of grace: "If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day," said the weeping Saviour of the world to foreknown and determined Jerusalem. When God's decrees are gone out, they are not always revocable; and, therefore, it was a great caution of the apostle, that we should "follow peace and holiness, and look diligently that

we fall not from the grace of God, lest any of us become like Esau, to whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears[g]:" meaning, that we also may put ourselves into a condition, when it shall be impossible we should be renewed unto repentance: and those are they " who sin a sin unto death, for whom" we have, from the apostle, no encouragement " to pray[h]." And these are in so general and conclusive terms described in Scripture, that every persevering sinner hath great reason to suspect himself to be in the number: if he endeavours, as soon as he thinks of it, to recover, it is the best sign he was not arrived so far; but he that liveth long in a violent and habitual course of sin, is at the margin and brim of that state of final reprobation; and some men are in it before they be aware, and to some God reckons their days swifter, and their periods shorter. The use I make of this consideration is, that if any man hath reason to suspect, or to be certain, that his time of repentance is past, it is most likely to be a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, a life contrary to the mercies and grace of the evangelical covenant; for he hath provoked God as long as he could, and rejected the offers of grace as long as he lived, and refused virtue till he could not entertain her, and hath done all those things which a person rejected from hopes of repentance can easily be imagined to have done. And if there be any time of rejection, although it may be earlier, yet it is also certainly the last.

31. Concerning the second, I shall add this to the former discourse of it, that perfect pardon of sins is not in this world at all, after the first emission and great efflux of it in our first regeneration. During this life we are in imperfection, minority, and under conditions, which we have prevaricated; and our recovery is in perpetual flux, in heightenings and declensions, and we are highly uncertain of our acceptation, because we are not certain of our restitution and innocence; we know not whether we have done all that is sufficient to repair the breach made in the first state of favour and baptismal grace. But " he that is dead," saith St. Paul, " is justified from sin[i];" not till then. And therefore, in the doctrine of the most learned Jews, it is affirmed:

[g] Heb. xii. 14, 15, 16. [h] 1 John, v. 16. [i] Rom. vi. 7.

" He that is guilty of the profanation of the name of God, he shall not interrupt the apparent malignity of it by his present repentance, nor make atonement in the day of expiation, nor wash the stains away by chastising of himself; but during his life, it remains wholly in suspense, and, before death, is not extinguished;" according to the saying of the prophet Isaiah, " This iniquity shall not be blotted out till ye die, saith the Lord of Hosts[k]." And some wise persons have affirmed, that Jacob related to this in his expression and appellatives of God, whom he called " the God of Abraham, and the fear of his father Isaac[l]," because, as the doctors of the Jews tell us, Abraham, being dead, was ascribed into the final condition of God's family; but Isaac, being living, had apprehensions of God, not only of a pious, but also of a tremulous fear: he was not sure of his own condition, much less of the degrees of his reconciliation, how far God had forgiven his sins, and how far he had retained them. And it is certain, that if every degree of the Divine favour be not assured by a holy life, those sins, of whose pardon we were most hopeful, return in as full vigour and clamorous importunity as ever, and are made more vocal by the appendant ingratitude, and other accidental degrees. And this Christ taught us by a parable: for as the lord made his uncharitable servant pay all that debt which he had formerly forgiven him; even " so will God do to us, if we, from our hearts, forgive not one another their trespasses[m]." " Behold the goodness and severity of God," saith St. Paul: " on them which fell, severity; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in that goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off. For this is my covenant which I shall make with them, when I shall take away their sins[n]." And if this be true in those sins which God certainly hath forgotten, such as were all those which were committed before our illumination; much rather is it true in those which we committed after, concerning whose actual and full pardon we cannot be certain without a revelation. So that our pardon of sins, when it is granted after the breach of our covenant, is just so secure as our perseverance is: concerning which, because we must ascer-

[k] Isaiah, xxii. 14. [l] Gen. xxxi. 42.
[m] Matt. xviii. 35. [n] Rom. xi. 22, 27.

tain it as well as we can, but ever with fear and trembling, so also is the estate of our pardon hazardous, conditional, revocable, and uncertain; and therefore, the best of men do, all their lives, ask pardon, even of those sins for which they have wept bitterly, and done the sharpest and severest penance. And, if it be necessary, we pray that we may not enter into temptation, because temptation is full of danger, and the danger may bring a sin, and the sin may ruin us: it is also necessary that we understand the condition of our pardon to be, as is the condition of our person, variable as will, sudden as affections, alterable as our purposes, revocable as our own good intentions, and then made as ineffective as our inclinations to good actions. And there is no way to secure our confidence and our hope, but by being perfect, and holy, and pure, as our heavenly Father is; that is, in the sense of human capacity, free from the habits of all sin, and active, and industrious, and continuing in the ways of godliness. For upon this only the promise is built, and by our proportion to this state we must proportion our confidence; we have no other revelation. Christ reconciled us to his Father upon no other conditions, and made the covenant upon no other articles, but of a holy life, in obedience universal and perpetual: and the abatements of the rigorous sense of the words, as they are such as may infinitely testify and prove his mercy, so they are such as must secure our duty and habitual graces; an industry manly, constant, and Christian: and because these have so great latitude, (and to what degrees God will accept our returns, he hath nowhere punctually described,) he that is most severe in his determination does best secure himself, and, by exacting the strictest account of himself, shall obtain the easier scrutiny at the hands of God. The use I make of this consideration, is to the same purpose with the former: for if every day of sin, and every criminal act, is a degree of recess from the possibilities of heaven, it would be considered at how great distance a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, may apprehend himself to stand for mercy and pardon: and since the terms of restitution must, in labour, and in extension of time, or intention of degrees, be of value great enough to restore him to some proportion or equivalence with that state of grace from whence he is fallen, and upon which the

covenant was made with him; how impossible, or how near to impossible, it will appear to him to go so far, and do so much in that state, and in those circumstances of disability.

32. Concerning the third particular, I consider that repentance, as it is described in Scripture, is a system of holy duties, not of one kind, not properly consisting of parts, as if it were a single grace; but it is the reparation of that estate into which Christ first put us, "a renewing us in the spirit of our mind," so the apostle calls it; and the Holy Ghost hath taught this truth to us by the implication of many appellatives, and also by express discourses. For there is in Scripture a "repentance to be repented of[o]," and a "repentance not to be repented of[p]." The first is mere sorrow for what is past, an ineffective trouble, producing nothing good; such as was the repentance of Judas, "he repented, and hanged himself;" and such was that of Esau, when it was too late; and so was the repentance of the five foolish virgins: which examples tell us also when ours is an impertinent and ineffectual repentance. To this repentance pardon is nowhere promised in Scripture. But there is a repentance which is called "conversion, or amendment of life," a repentance productive of holy fruits, such as the Baptist and our blessed Saviour preached, such as himself also propounded in the example of the Ninevites[q]; they "repented at the preaching of Jonah," that is, "they fasted, they covered them in sackcloth, they cried mightily unto God, yea, they turned every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands[r]." And this was it that appeased God in that instance. "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, and did it not."

33. The same character of repentance we find in the prophet Ezekiel: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that

[o] Μεταμέλεια.

[p] Μετάνοια. Μετάμεληθεὶς ἐπέστρεψε, coi in Act. Apost. opponitur μετανόησατε οὖν καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts, iii. 19.

Huic enim promittitur peccatorum remissio in seq. εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας.

[q] Matt. xii. 41. [r] Jona. iii. 8, 10.

which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die[s]." And in the Gospel, repentance is described with as full and entire comprehensions as in the old prophets. For faith and repentance are the whole duty of the Gospel. Faith, when it is in conjunction with a practical grace, signifies an intellectual[t]. Faith signifies the submission of the understanding to the institution; and repentance includes all that whole practice which is the entire duty of a Christian, after he hath been overtaken in a fault. And, therefore, repentance first includes a renunciation and abolition of all evil, and then also enjoins a pursuit of every virtue, and that till they arrive at an habitual confirmation.

34. Of the first sense are all those expressions of Scripture which imply repentance to be the deletery of sins. "Repentance from dead works[u]," St. Paul affirms to be the prime fundamental of the religion; that is, conversion, or returning from dead works: for unless repentance be so construed, it is not good sense. And this is therefore highly verified, because repentance is intended to set us into the condition of our first undertaking, and articles covenanted with God. And therefore it is "a redemption of the time," that is, a recovering what we lost, and making it up by our doubled industry. "Remember whence thou art fallen, repent," that is, return, "and do thy first works," said the Spirit to the angel of the church of Ephesus, or else "I will remove thy candlestick, except thou repent[x]." It is a restitution; "if a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one[y]," that is, put him where he was. And then, that repentance also implies a doing all good, is certain by the sermon of the Baptist, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance[z]:" "Do thy first works," was the sermon of the Spirit; "Laying aside every weight, and the sin that easily

[s] Ezek. xviii. 27, and xxxiii. 15.

[t] Διόπερ οὐκ ἀποστατέον οὐδενὸς τῶν χρησίμων διὰ τὰς προφαινομένας δυσχερείας· προσακτέον δὲ τὴν ἕξιν, ἣ πάντα τὰ καλὰ γίνεται θηρατὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.—*Polybius.*

Vide etiam Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. ii. ubi ad eundem sensum definit pœnitentiam.

[u] Μετάνοια ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν ἔργων, Heb. vi. 1.

[x] Apocal. ii. 5. [y] Gal. vi. 1. [z] Matt. iii. 8.

encircles us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us;" so St. Paul taught. And St. Peter gives charge, that when we "have escaped the corruptions of the world, and of lusts[a]," besides this, we "give all diligence" to acquire the rosary and conjugation of Christian virtues. And they are proper effects, or rather constituent parts, of a holy repentance. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul, "not to be repented of[b]:" and that ye may know what is signified by repentance, behold the product was "carefulness, clearing of themselves, indignation, fear, vehement desires, zeal, and revenge;" to which if we add the epithet of holy, (for these were the results of a godly sorrow, and the members of a repentance not to be repented of,) we are taught that repentance, besides the purging out the malice of iniquity, is also a sanctification of the whole man, a turning nature into grace, passions into reason, and the flesh into spirit.

35. To this purpose I reckon those phrases of Scripture calling it a "renewing of our minds[c];" a "renewing of the Holy Ghost[d];" a "cleansing of our hands, and purifying our hearts[e]," that is, a becoming holy in our affections and righteous in our actions; a "transformation[f]," or utter change; a "crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts[g];" a "purging out the old leaven, and becoming a new conspersion[h];" a "waking out of sleep[i], and walking honestly, as in the day[k];" a "being born again," and being "born from above[l];" a "new life." And I consider that these preparative actions of repentance, such as are sorrow, and confession of sins, and fasting, and exterior mortifications, and severities, are but forerunners of repentance[m], some of the retinue, and they are of the family, but they no more complete the duty of repentance than the harbingers are the whole court, or than the singers are all the body. There

[a] 2 Pet. i. 4, 5. [b] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [c] Rom. xii. 2.
[d] Tit. iii. 5. [e] Jam. iv. 8. [f] Gal. v. 24.
[g] Col. iii. 5. [h] 1 Cor. v. 7. [i] Eph. v. 14. Rom. xiii. 11.
[k] Rom. xiii. 13. [l] John, iii. 3.

[m] ——— Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
Eradenda cupidinis
Pravi sunt elementa; et teneræ nimis
Mentes asperioribus
Formandæ studiis.— *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 24.

" is more joy in heaven," said our blessed Saviour, " over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." There is no man but needs a tear and a sorrow, even for his daily weaknesses, and possibly they are the instrumental expiations of our sudden, and frequent, and lesser surprises of imperfection; but the " just persons need no repentance," that is, need no inversion of state, no transformation from condition to condition, but from the less to the more perfect the best man hath. And, therefore, those are vain persons who, when they " owe God a hundred, will write fourscore, or a thousand, will write fifty." It was the saying of an excellent person, that " repentance is the beginning of philosophy, a flight and renunciation of evil works and words, and the first preparation and entrance into a life which is never to be repented of: and, therefore, a penitent is not taken with umbrages and appearances, nor quits a real good for an imaginary, or chooses evil for fear of enemies and adverse accidents; but peremptorily conforms his sentence to the Divine laws, and submits his whole life in a conformity with them[n]." He that said those excellent words had not been taught the Christian institution, but it was admirable reason and deep philosophy, and most consonant to the reasonableness of virtue, and the proportions and designs of repentance, and no other than the doctrine of Christian philosophy.

36. And it is considerable, since in Scripture there is a repentance mentioned, which is impertinent and ineffectual as to the obtaining pardon, a repentance implied which is to be repented of, and another expressed which is " never to be repented of;" and this is described to be a new state of life, a whole conversion and transformation of the man; it follows, that whatsoever, in any sense, can be called repentance, and yet is less than this new life, must be that ineffective repentance. A sorrow is a repentance, and all the acts of dolorous expression are but the same sorrow in other characters, and they are good when they are parts or instru-

[n] Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυγὴ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἡ πρώτη παρασκευὴ — διὸ αὕτη προσδοκίας τῶν λεγομένων ἀγαθῶν τὸ ὄντως ἀγαθὸν ἂν παρέδῃ, οὔτε φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ πρᾶξιν αἰρήσεται· ἱστάσῃ δὲ τῇ γνώμῃ πρὸς τοὺς θείους κανόνας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον ἀπευθύνει. — *Hierocl. in Pythag.*

ments of the true repentance: but when they are the whole repentance, that repentance is no better than that of Judas, nor more prosperous than that of Esau. Every sorrow is not a "godly sorrow," and that which is, is but instrumental, and in order to repentance. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul; that is, it does its share towards it, as every grace does toward the pardon, as every degree of pardon does toward heaven. By "godly sorrow," it is probable St. Paul means the same thing which the school hath since called contrition; a grief proceeding from a holy principle, from our love of God, and anger that we have offended him: and yet this is a great way off from that repentance without the performance of which we shall certainly perish: but no contrition alone is remissive of sins, but as it co-operates towards the integrity of our duty. "Cùm conversus ingemuerit," is the prophet's expression; When a man "mourns, and turns from all his evil way, that is a godly sorrow," and that is repentance too[o]: but the tears of a dolorous person, though running over with great effusions, and shed in great bitterness, and expressed in actions of punitive justice, all being but the same sense in louder language, being nothing but the expressions of sorrow, are good only as they tend farther; and if they do, they may, by degrees, bring us to repentance, and that repentance will bring us to heaven; but of themselves they may as well make the sea swell beyond its margin, or water and refresh the sun-burnt earth, as move God to mercy, and pierce the heavens. But then to the consideration we may add, that a sorrow upon a death-bed, after a vicious life, is such as cannot easily be understood to be ordinarily so much as the beginning of virtue, or the first instance towards a holy life. For he that till then retained his sins, and now, when he is certain and believes he shall die, or is fearful lest he should, is sorrowful that he hath sinned, is only sorrowful because he is like to perish: and such a sorrow may perfectly consist with as great an affection to sin, as ever the man

[o] Μετανόησατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts, iii. 19.

Ὡς γὰρ ἴχνεσι δίκην τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις, παίονται τῆς ἀρχῆς. — *Arist. 2. Rhetor.*

—— Ἀγαθοὶ ἀριδάκρυες ἀνδρες. — *Hom.*

Ὁ μετανοῶν οὐ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται. — *Hierocl.*

had in the highest caresses and invitation of his lust. For even then, in certain circumstances, he would have refused to have acted his greatest temptation. The boldest and most pungent lust would refuse to be satisfied in the market-place, or with a dagger at his heart; and the greatest intemperance would refuse a pleasant meal, if he believed the meat to be mixed with poison: and yet this restraint of appetite is no abatement of the affection, any more than the violent fears which, by being incumbent upon the death-bed penitent, make him grieve for the evil consequents more than to hate the malice and irregularity. He that does not grieve till his greatest fear presses him hard, and damnation treads upon his heels, feels indeed the effects of fear, but can have no present benefit of his sorrow, because it had no natural principle, but a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause, inconsistent with a free, placid, and moral election. But this I speak only by way of caution: for God's mercy is infinite, and can, if he please, make it otherwise. But it is not good to venture, unless you have a promise.

37. The same also I consider concerning the purpose of a new life, which that any man should judge to be repentance, that duty which restores us, is more unreasonable than to think sorrow will do it. For as a man may sorrow, and yet never be restored, (and he may sorrow so much the more, because he shall never be restored, as Esau did, as the five foolish virgins did, and as many more do:) so he that purposes to lead a new life, hath convinced himself that the duty is undone, and therefore his pardon not granted, nor his condition restored. As a letter is not a word, nor a word an action; as an embryo is not a man, nor the seed the fruit: so is a purpose of obedience but the element of repentance, the first imaginations of it differing from the grace itself as a disposition from a habit, or (because itself will best express itself) as the purpose does from the act[p]. For either a holy life is necessary, or it is not necessary. If it be not, why does any man hope to "escape the wrath to come," by resolving to do an unnecessary thing? or if he does not

[p] Nam illi qui ex aliis propositis in alia transiliunt, aut ne transiliunt quidem, sed casu quodam transmittuntur, quomodo habere quicquam certum mansurumve possunt, suspensi et vagi?—*Seneca, Ep.* 23.

purpose it, when he pretends he does, that is a mocking of God, and that is a great way from being an instrument of his restitution. But if a holy life be necessary, as it is certain by infinite testimonies of Scriptures, it is the "unum necessarium," the one great necessary; it cannot reasonably be thought that any thing less than doing it shall serve our turns. That which is only in purpose is not yet done, and yet it is necessary it should be done, because it is necessary we should purpose it. And in this we are sufficiently concluded by that ingeminate expression used by St. Paul: "In Jesus Christ nothing can avail but a new creature;" nothing "but faith working by charity," nothing "but a keeping the commandments of God[q]." "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; they are the Israel of God[r]."

38. This consideration I intended to oppose against the carnal security of death-bed penitents, who have (it is to be feared) spent a vicious life, who have therefore mocked themselves, because they meant to mock God, they would reap what they sowed not. "But be not deceived," saith the apostle; "he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting[s]." Only this, "let us not be weary of well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not[t]:" meaning, that by a persevering industry, and a long work, and a succession of religious times, we must sow to the Spirit; a work of such length, that the greatest danger is of fainting and intercision: but he that sows to the Spirit, not being weary of well-doing, not fainting in the long process, he, and he only, shall reap life everlasting. But a purpose is none of all this. If it comes to act, and be productive of a holy life, then it is useful, and it was like the eve of a holiday, festival in the midst of its abstinence and vigils, it was the beginnings of a repentance. But if it never come to act, it was to no purpose, a mocking of God, an act of direct hypocrisy, a provocation of God, and a deceiving our own selves; you are unhappy you began not

[q] Gal. vi. 15, v. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 19.
[r] Gal. vi. 16.
[s] Gal. vi. 7, 8.
[t] Ver. 9.

early, or that your earlier days return not together with your good purposes[a].

39. And neither can this have any other sentence, though the purpose be made upon our death-bed. For God hath made no covenant with us on our death-bed distinct from that he made with us in our life and health. And since, in our life and present abilities, good purposes, and resolutions, and vows, (for they are but the same thing in differing degrees,) did signify nothing till they came to act, and no man was reconciled to God by good intentions, but by doing the will of God; can we imagine that such purposes can more prevail at the end of a wicked life than at the beginning? that less piety will serve our turns after fifty or sixty years' impiety, than after but five or ten? that a wicked and sinful life should by less pains be expiated than an unhappy year? For it is not in the state of grace as in other exterior actions of religion or charity, where God will accept the will for the deed, when the external act is inculpably out of our powers, and may also be supplied by the internal: as bendings of the body, by the prostration of the soul; alms, by charity; preaching, by praying for conversion. These things are necessary, because they are precepts, and obligatory only in certain circumstances, which may fail, and we be innocent and disobliged. But it is otherwise in the essential parts of our duty, which God hath made the immediate and next condition of our salvation, such which are never out of our power but by our own fault[x]. Such are charity, forgiveness, repentance, and faith; such to which we are assisted by God, such which are always put by God's grace into our power, therefore because God indispensably demands them. In these cases, as there is no revelation God will accept the will

[a] Mutatus ——————————
Dices, heu! (quoties te in speculo videris alterum)
Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?
Hor. lib. iv. *Od.* 10.

[x] Εἰς ποῖον ἔτι χρόνον ἀναβάλῃ τὸ τῶν βελτίστων ἀξιοῦν σεαυτὸν, καὶ ἐν μηδενὶ παραβαίνειν τὸν διαιροῦντα λόγον; παρέληφας τὰ θεωρήματα οἷς ἔδει σε συμβάλλειν, καὶ συμβέβληκας; ποῖον οὖν ἔτι διδάσκαλον προσδοκᾷς, ἵν' εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὑπερθῇς τὸν ἐπανόρθωσιν ποιῆσαι τὴν σεαυτοῦ; οὐκ ἔτι εἶ μειράκιον, ἀλλ' ἀνὴρ ἤδη τέλειος. Ἂν τοίνυν ἀμελήσῃς, καὶ ῥαθυμήσῃς, καὶ ἀεὶ ὑπερθήσεις ἐξ ὑπερθέσεων ποιῇς, προθέσεις ἐκ προθέσεων, καὶ ἡμέρας ἄλλας ἐπ' ἄλλαις ὁρίζῃς, μισθ' ἃς προσέξεις σεαυτῷ, λήσεις σεαυτὸν οὐ πρόοδον, ἀλλ ἰδιώτης διατελέσεις καὶ ζῶν καὶ ἀποθνήσκων. — *Epict.* c. 75.

for the deed, the purpose for the act, so it is unreasonable to expect it; because God did once put it into our powers, and, if we put it out, we must not complain of want of fire which ourselves have quenched, nor complain we cannot see, when we have put our own lights out; and hope God will accept the will for the deed, since we had no will to it when God put it into our powers. These are but fig-leaves to cover our nakedness, which our sin hath introduced.

40. For either the reducing such vows and purposes to act is the duty, without which the purpose is ineffectual; or else that practice is but the sign and testimony of a sincere intention, and that very sincere intention was of itself accepted by God in the first spring. If it was nothing but a sign, then the covenant which God made with man in Jesus Christ was faith and good meaning, not faith and repentance, and a man is justified as soon as ever he purposes well, before any endeavours are commenced, or any act produced, or habit ratified; and the duties of a holy life are but shadows and significations of a grace, no part of the covenant, not so much as smoke is of fire, but a mere sign of a person justified as soon as he made his vow: but then also a man may be justified five hundred times in a year, as often as he makes a new vow and confident resolution, which is then done most heartily, when the lust is newly satisfied, and the pleasure disappears for the instant, though the purpose disbands upon the next temptation. Yea, but, unless it be a sincere purpose, it will do no good; and although we cannot discern it, nor the man himself, yet God knows the heart; and if he sees it would have been reduced to act, then he accepts it, and this is the hopes of a dying man. But faint they are and dying, as the man himself.

41. For it is impossible for us to know but that what a man intends (as himself thinks) heartily, is sincerely meant, and if that may be insincere, and is to be judged only by a never-following event, (in case the man dies,) it cannot become to any man the ground of hope, nay, even to those persons who do mean sincerely, it is still an instrument of distrust and fears infinite, since his own sincere meaning hath nothing in the nature of the thing, no distinct formality, no principle, no sign to distinguish it from the insincere vows of sorrowful, but not truly penitent, persons. 2. A purpose acted and not

acted, differs not in the principle, but in the effect, which is extrinsical and accidental to the purpose, and each might be without the other: a man might live holily, though he had not made that vow; and when he hath made the vow, he may fail of living holily[y]. And as we should think it hard measure to have a damnation increased upon us for those sins which we would have committed if we had lived; so it cannot be reasonable to build our hopes of heaven upon an imaginary piety, which we never did, and, if we had lived, God knows whether we would or not. 3. God takes away the godly, lest malice should corrupt their understandings, and "for the elect's sake those days are shortened, which, if they should continue, no flesh should escape:" but now shall all that be laid upon their score[z], which, if God had not so prevented by their death, God knows they would have done? And God deals with the wicked in a proportionable manner, to the contrary purpose, he shortens their days, and takes away their possibilities and opportunities, when the time of repentance is past, because he will not do violence to their wills; and this "lest they should return, and be converted, and I should heal them[a]:" so that it is evident, some persons are by some acts of God, after a vicious life, and the frequent rejection of the Divine grace, at last prevented from mercy, who, without such courses, and in contrary circumstances, might possibly do acts of repentance, and return, and then "God would heal them." 4. Let their purposes and vows be never so sincere in the principle, yet, since a man who is in the state of grace may again fail of it, and forget he was "purged from his old sins," (and every dying sinner did so, if ever he was washed in the laver of regeneration, and sanctified in his spirit;) then much more may such a sincere purpose fail, and then it would be known to what distance of time or state from his purpose will God give his final sentence.

[y] Et quis tandem est nostrûm qui, quod ad sese attinet, æquum censeat quenquam pœnas dare ob eam rem, quòd arguatur malè facere voluisse? Nemo, opinor.——Sed si honorem non æquum est habere ob eam rem, quòd bene facere voluisse quis dicit, neque fecit tamen; Rhodiensibus tale erit, non quòd malè fecerunt, sed quia voluisse dicuntur facere.—*Orat. M. Catonis pro Rhodiens. apud A. Gellium*, lib. vii. cap. 3.

[z] Nunquam crescit ex post facto præteriti æstimatio.—*D. de Reg. Jur.*

[a] Matt. xiii. 15, ex Isa. vi. 9, 10. Mark, iv. 12. Luke, viii. 10. John, xii. 40. Acts, xxviii. 27. Rom. xi. 8.

Whether will he quit him, because in the first stage he will correspond with his intention, and act his purposes; or condemn him, because in his second stage he would prevaricate? And when a man does fail, it is not because his first principle was not good; for the Holy Spirit, which is certainly the best principle of spiritual actions, may be extinguished in a man, and a sincere or hearty purpose may be lost, or it may again be recovered, and be lost again: so that it is as unreasonable as it is unrevealed, that a sincere purpose on a death-bed shall obtain pardon, or pass for a new state of life. Few men are at those instants, and in such pressures, hypocritical and vain; and yet to perform such purposes is a new work and a new labour; it comes in upon a new stock, differing from that principle, and will meet with temptations, difficulties, and impediments; and an honest heart is not sure to remain so, but may split upon a rock of a violent invitation. A promise is made to be faithful or unfaithful *ex post facto*, by the event, but it was sincere or insincere in the principle, only if the person promising did, or did not, respectively at that time mean what he said. A sincere promise many times is not truly performed.

42. Concerning all the other acts which it is to be supposed a dying person can do, I have only this consideration: If they can make up a new creature, become a new state, be in any sense a holy life, a keeping the commandments of God, a following of peace and holiness, a becoming holy in all conversation; if they can arrive to the lowest sense of that excellent condition Christ intended to all his disciples, when he made "keeping the commandments" to be the condition of "entering into life," and not "crying Lord, Lord, but doing the will of God;" if he that hath served the lusts of the flesh, and taken pay under all God's enemies during a long and malicious life, can, for any thing a dying person can do, be said in any sense to have lived holily; then his hopes are fairly built: if not, they rely upon a sand, and the storm of death, and the Divine displeasure, will beat too violently upon them. There are no suppletories of the evangelical covenant: if we "walk according to the rule," then "shall peace and righteousness kiss each other;" if we have sinned, and prevaricated the rule, repentance must bring us into the ways of righteousness, and then we must go on

upon the old stock; but the "deeds of the flesh" must be "mortified," and Christ must "dwell in us," and the Spirit must "reign in us," and virtue must be habitual, and the habits must be confirmed: and this as we do by the Spirit of Christ, so it is hallowed and accepted by the grace of God, and we put into a condition of favour, and redeemed from sin, and reconciled to God. But this will not be put off with single acts, nor divided parts, nor newly-commenced purposes[b], nor fruitless sorrow; it is a great folly to venture eternity upon dreams: so that now let me represent the condition of a dying person after a vicious life.

43. First: He that considers the frailty of human bodies, their incidences and aptness to sickness, casualties, death, sudden or expected, the condition of several diseases, that some are of too quick a sense, and are intolerable, some are dull, stupid, and lethargical; then adds the prodigious judgments which fall upon many sinners in the act of sin, and are marks of our dangers, and God's essential justice and severity; and that security which possesses such persons whose lives are vicious, and that habitual carelessness, and groundless confidence, or an absolute inconsideration, which is generally the condition and constitution of such minds, every one whereof is likely enough to confound a persevering sinner in miseries eternal; will soon apprehend the danger of a delayed repentance to be infinite and unmeasurable[c].

44. Secondly: But suppose such a person, having escaped the antecedent circumstances of the danger, is set fairly upon his death-bed, with the just apprehension of his sins about him, and his addresses to repentance; consider then the strength of his lusts, that the sins he is to mortify are inveterate, habitual, and confirmed, having had the growth and stability of a whole life; that the liberty of his will is impaired, (the Scripture saying of such persons, "whose eyes are full of lust, and that cannot cease from sin;" and that "his servants they are whom they obey[d];" that they are

[b] Audies plerosque dicentes, A quinquagesimo in otium secedam; Sexagesimus annus ab officiis me dimittet. Et quem tandem longioris vitæ præmium accipis? — *Senec.*

[c] Παρήνει δὲ τοῖς συνοῦσι μὴ ἀναβάλλεσθαι τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ὅπερ τοὺς πολλοὺς παιεῖν, πρεσβυμίας ὁριζομένους ἑορτὰς ἢ πανηγύρεις, ὡς ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἀρξομένους τοῦ μὴ ψεύσασθαι, καὶ τοῦ τὰ δέοντα ποιήσειν. — *Lucian. Nigrin.*

[d] 2 Pet. ii. 14.

slaves to sin, and so not *sui juris*, not at their own dispose,) that his understanding is blinded, his appetite is mutinous, and of a long time used to rebel and prevail; that all the inferior faculties are in disorder; that he wants the helps of grace proportionable to his necessities, (for the longer he hath continued in sin, the weaker the grace of God is in him; so that, in effect, at that time the more need he hath, the less he shall receive, it being God's rule to "give to him that hath, and from him that hath not, to take even what he hath:") then add the innumerable parts and great burdens of repentance, that it is not a sorrow, nor a purpose, because both these suppose that to be undone which is the only necessary support of all our hopes in Christ when it is done; the innumerable difficult cases of conscience that may then occur, particularly in the point of restitution, (which, among many other necessary parts of repentance, is indispensably required of all persons that are able, and in every degree in which they are able;) the many temptations of the devil, the strength of passions, the impotency of the flesh, the illusions of the spirits of darkness, the tremblings[e] of the heart, the incogitancy of the mind, the implication and entanglings of ten thousand thoughts, and the impertinences of a disturbed fancy, and the great hinderances[f] of a sick body, and a sad and weary spirit: all these represent a death-bed to be but an ill station for a penitent[g]. If the person be suddenly snatched away, he is not left so much as to dispute; if he be permitted to languish in his sickness, he is either stupid, and apprehends nothing, or else miserable, and hath reason to apprehend too much. However, all these difficulties are to be past and overcome before the man be put into a saveable condition. From this consideration, though perhaps it may infer more, yet we cannot but conclude this difficulty to be as great as the former danger, that is, vast, and ponderous, and insupportable.

[e] Ἐπειδάν τις ἐγγὺς ᾖ τοῦ οἴεσθαι τελευτήσειν, εἰσέρχεται αὐτῷ φόβος καὶ φροντὶς, περὶ ὧν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν οὐκ εἰσήει. — *Plato de Repub.*

[f] Nequit sanè fieri ut homo intelligat aut cognoscat quicquam ex cognitione Creatoris, si adversâ valetudine contabescat. — *Maimon. Con. Eth.* cap. 4.

[g] Ante senectutem, curandum est ut homo bene vivat; in senectute autem, ut bene moriatur. — *Seneca.*

45. Thirdly: Suppose the clinic, or death-bed penitent, to be as forward in these employments, and as successful in the mastering many of the objections, as reasonably can be thought: yet it is considerable, that there is a repentance which is to be repented of, and that is a repentance which is not productive of fruits of amendment of life; that there is a period set down by God in his judgment, and that many, who have been profane as Esau was, are reduced into the condition of Esau, and "there is no place left for their repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears;" that they who have long refused to hear God calling them to repentance, God will refuse to hear them calling for grace and mercy; that "he will laugh" at some men "when their calamity comes[h];" that the five foolish virgins addressed themselves at the noise of the bridegroom's coming, and begged oil, and went out to buy oil, and yet, for want of some more time and an early diligence, came too late, and were shut out for ever; that it is nowhere revealed that such late endeavours and imperfect practices shall be accepted; that God hath made but one covenant with us in Jesus Christ, which is faith and repentance consigned in baptism; and the signification of them, and the purpose of Christ, is, "that we should henceforth no more serve sin," but mortify and kill him perpetually, and destroy his kingdom, and extinguish, as much as in us lies, his very title; that we should "live holily, justly, and soberly in this present world, in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that either we must be continued or reduced to this state of holy living and habitual sanctity, or we have no title to the promises; that every degree of recession from the state Christ first put us in, is a recession from our hopes, and an inse-

[h] O si compunctas humana superbia mentes
Ante obitum mutare, nec exspectare suprema
Fata velit ——— ——— ——— ———
Pœnitet ambiguè quem serò pœnitet; ergò
Præsentis spatium nobis dum creditur ævi,
Dum patulam cunctis Christi clementia sese
Præbet, præteritæ plangamus crimina vitæ,
Dum licet, et sano ingenioque animoque valemus.—*Alcimus Avit.*

Bis jam penè tibi consul trigesimus instat,
Et numerat paucos vix tua vita dies.—*Mart.* lib. i. *Ep.* 16.

Vide S. Ambros. lib. ii. de Pœnit. cap. i. et ii. S. Aug. in lib. Homil. homil. xli. S. Basil. Orat. iv. S. Bernard. in parvis Serm. ser. xxxviii.

curing our condition, and we add to our confidence only as our obedience is restored. All this is but a sad story to a dying person, who "sold himself to work wickedness," in an habitual iniquity and aversation from the conditions of the holy covenant in which he was sanctified.

46. And certainly it is unreasonable to plant all our hopes of heaven upon a doctrine that is destructive of all piety, which supposes us in such a condition that God hath been offended at us all our life long, and yet that we can never return our duties to him, unless he will unravel the purposes of his predestination, or call back time again, and begin a new computation of years for us; and if he did, it would be still as uncertain. For what hope is there to that man who hath fulfilled all iniquity, and hath not fulfilled righteousness? Can a man live to the devil, and die to God? "sow to the flesh," and "reap to the Spirit?" hope God will in mercy reward him who hath served his enemy? Sure it is, the doctrine of the avail of a death-bed repentance cannot easily be reconciled with God's purposes and intentions to have us live a good life, for it would reconcile us to the hopes of heaven for a few thoughts, or words, or single actions, when our life is done; it takes away the benefit of many graces, and the use of more, and the necessity of all.

47. For let it be seriously weighed, To what purpose is the variety of God's grace? what use is there of preventing, restraining, concomitant, subsequent, and persevering grace, unless it be in order to a religious conversation? And by deferring repentance to the last, we despoil our souls, and rob the Holy Ghost of the glory of many rays and holy influences, with which the church is watered and refreshed; that it may "grow from grace to grace," till it be consummate in glory. It takes away the very being of chastity and temperance; no such virtues, according to this doctrine, need to be named among Christians. For the dying person is not in capacity to exercise these; and then, either they are troublesome, without which we may do well enough, or else the condition of the unchaste and intemperate clinic is sad and deplorable. For how can he eject those devils of lust, and drunkenness, and gluttony, from whom the disease hath taken all powers of election and variety of choice, unless it be possible to root out long-contracted habits in a moment, or acquire the habits

of chastity, sobriety, and temperance, those self-denying and laborious graces, without doing a single act of the respective virtues, in order to obtaining of habits; unless it be so that God will infuse habits into us more immediately than he creates our reasonable souls, in an instant, and without the co-operation of the suscipient, without "the working out our salvation with fear," and without "giving all diligence," and "running with patience," and "resisting unto blood," and "striving to the last," and "enduring unto the end," in a long fight and a long race? If God infuses such habits, why have we laws given us, and are commanded to work, and to do our duty with such a succession and lasting diligence, as if the habits were to be acquired; to which, indeed, God promises and ministers his aids, still leaving us the persons obliged to the law and the labour, as we are capable of the reward? I need not instance any more. But this doctrine of a death-bed repentance, is inconsistent with the duties of mortification; with all the vindictive and punitive parts of repentance, in exterior instances; with the precepts of waiting, and watchfulness, and preparation, and standing in a readiness against "the coming of the bridegroom;" with "the patience of well-doing;" with exemplary living; with the imitation of the life of Christ, and conformities to his passion; with the kingdom, and dominion, and growth of grace. And, lastly, it goes about to defeat one of God's great purposes; for God, therefore, concealed the time of our death[1], that we might always stand upon our guard. The holy Jesus told us so: "Watch, for ye know not what hour the Lord will come:" but this makes men seem more crafty in their late-begun piety, than God was provident and mysterious in concealing the time of our dissolution.

48. And now, if it be demanded, How long time must our repentance and holy living take up? What is the last period of commencement of our piety, after which it will be unaccepted or ineffectual? Will a month, or a year, or three

[1] Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus. — *Horat.* lib. iii. *Od.* 29.
Vita data est utenda, data est sine fœnore nobis
Mutua, nec certa persolüenda die.

Quæris quod sit longissimum vitæ spatium? Usque ad sapientiam pervenire. Qui ad illàm pervenit, attingit non longissimum finem, sed maximum. — *Senec.*

years, or seven, suffice? For since every man fails of his first condition, and makes violent recessions from the state of his redemption and his baptismal grace, how long may he lie in that state of recession, with hopes of salvation[k]? To this I answer, He cannot lie in sin a moment, without hazarding his eternity; every instant is a danger, and all the parts of its duration do increase it; and there is no answer to be given antecedently, and by way of rule, but all the hopes of our restitution depend upon the event. It is just as if we should ask, How long will it be before an infant comes to the perfect use of reason, or before a fool will become wise, or an ignorant person become excellently learned? The answer to such questions must be given according to the capacity of the man, to the industry of his person, to his opportunities or hinderances, to his life and health, and to God's blessing upon him. Only this; every day of deferring it lessens our hopes, and increases the difficulty; and when this increasing, divisible difficulty comes to the last period of impossibility, God only knows, because he measures the thoughts of man, and comprehends his powers in a span; and himself only can tell how he will correspond, in those assistances, without which we can never be restored[l]. "Agree with thy adversary quickly, while thou art in the way:" quickly. And, there-

[k] Malè vivunt qui semper vivere incipiunt. Non potest stare paratus ad mortem, qui modò incipit vivere. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est; quidam antè vivere desièrunt quàm inciperent.—*Senec. Ep.* 23.

[l] Hic est locus solvendi æris alieni.—*Senec.* ibid.

Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat.— *Idem, Ep.* 30.

——— Qui peccatum moriens dimittit, et ipsa
In serum tempus differt admissa fateri,
Non tam dimittit, quàm dimittatur ab illis.— *Alcim. Avitus.*

Non potest stare paratus ad mortem qui modò incipit vivere. Id agendum est, ut satis vixerimus. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est. Si hoc judicas mirum, adjiciam quod magis admireris: Quidam antè vivere desièrunt quàm inciperent.— *Senec. Ep.* 23.

Cras te victurum, cras dicis, Posthume, semper.
Dic mihi, Cras istud, Posthume, quando venit?
Cras vives? hodie jam vivere, Posthume, serum est:
Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri.—*Martial.* lib. v. *Ep.* 59.

Non bene distuleris, videas quæ posse negari;
Et solum hoc ducas, quod fuit, esse tuum.
Non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere, Vivam.
Sera nimis vita est crastina; vive hodie.— lib. i. *Ep.* 16.

fore, the Scripture sets down no other time than "to-day; while it is yet called to-day." But, because it will every day be called to-day, we must remember, that our duty is such as requires a time, a duration; it is a course, "a race that is set before us;" a duty requiring patience, and longanimity, and perseverance, and great care and diligence, "that we faint not." And, supposing we could gather probably, by circumstances, when the last period of our hopes begins; yet he that stands out as long as he can, gives probation, that he came not in of good will or choice; that he loves not the present service; that his body is present, but his heart is estranged from the yoke of his present employment; and then all that he can do is odious to God, being a sacrifice without a heart, an offertory of shells and husks, while the devil and the man's lusts have devoured the kernels.

49. So that this question is not to be asked beforehand; but after a man hath done much of the work, and in some sense lived holily, then he may inquire into his condition; whether, if he persevere in that, he may hope for the mercies of Jesus. But he that inquires beforehand, as commonly he means ill, so he can be answered by none but God; because the satisfaction of such a vain question depends upon future contingencies, and accidents depending upon God's secret pleasure and predestination. He that repents but to-day, repents late enough, that he put it off from yesterday. It may be that some may begin to-day, and find mercy, and to another person it may be too late; but no man is safe or wise that puts it off till to-morrow. And that it may appear how necessary it is to begin early, and that the work is of difficulty and continuance, and that time still increases the objections, it is certain that all the time that is lost must be redeemed by something in the sequel, equivalent, or fit to make up the breach, and to cure the wounds long since made, and long festering; and this must be done by doing the first works, by something that God hath declared he will accept instead of them: the intention of the following actions, and the frequent repetition, must make up the defect in the extension and co-existence, with a longer time. It was an act of an heroical repentance, and great detestation of the crime, which Thomas Cantipratanus relates, of a young gentleman condemned to die for robberies; who, endeavouring to testify his

repentance, and, as far as was then permitted him, to expiate the crime, begged of the judge, that tormentors might be appointed him, that he might be long a dying, and be cut in small pieces, that the severity of the execution might be proportionable to the immensity of his sorrow and greatness of the iniquity. Such great acts do facilitate our pardon, and hasten the restitution, and in a few days comprise the elapsed duty of many months: but to rely upon such acts is the last remedy, and like unlikely physic to a despairing person: if it does well, it is well; if it happen otherwise, he must thank himself, it is but what in reason he could expect. The Romans sacrificed a dog to Mana Geneta, and prayed, "Ne quis domi natorum bonus fiat," that none of their domestics might be good; that is, that they might not die, (said Plutarch[m],) because dead people are called good. But if they be so only when they die, they will hardly find the reward of goodness in the reckonings of eternity, when to kill and to make good is all one, (as Aristotle observed it to be in the Spartan covenant with the Tegeatæ[n], and as it is in the case of penitents, never mending their lives till their lives be done;) that goodness is fatal, and the prologue of an eternal death.

50. I conclude this point with the words of St. Paul: "God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality;" to them, "eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness;" to them "indignation and wrath: tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil[o]."

51. Having now discoursed of repentance upon distinct principles, I shall not need to consider upon those particulars, which are usually reckoned parts or instances of repentance; such as are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Repentance is the fulfilling all righteousness, and includes in it whatsoever is matter of Christian duty, and expressly commanded; such as is contrition or godly sorrow, and confession to God, both which are declared in Scripture to be in order to pardon and purgation of our sins. "A contrite and a broken heart,

[m] Τελευτῶντες χρηστοί. Ῥωμαϊκ. κεφ. νβ'.

[n] Μηδένα χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτιννύναι.—*Plutar. ibid. ex Aristotele.*

[o] Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

O God, thou wilt not despise;" and, "If we confess our sins, God is just and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." To which add, concerning satisfaction, that it is a judging and punishing of ourselves; that it also is an instrument of repentance, and a fruit of godly sorrow, and of good advantage for obtaining mercy of God. For "indignation and revenge" are reckoned by St. Paul, effects of "a godly sorrow;" and the blessing which encourages its practice, is instanced by the same saint: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord; but if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged:" where he expounds "judged" by "chastened;" if we were severer to ourselves, God would be gentle and remiss[p]. And there are only these two cautions to be annexed, and then the direction is sufficient. 1. That when promise of pardon is annexed to any of these or another grace, or any good action, it is not to be understood as if alone it were effectual, either to the abolition or pardon of sins; but the promise is made to it, as to a member of the whole body of piety. In the coadunation and conjunction of parts, the title is firm, but not at all in distinction and separation. For it is certain, if we fail in one, we are guilty of all; and therefore cannot be repaired by any one grace, or one action, or one habit. And, therefore, "charity hides a multitude of sins[q]," with men and God too; "alms deliver from death[r]; humility pierceth the clouds," and will not depart before its answer be gracious; and "hope purifieth[s], and makes not ashamed[t];" and patience, and faith, and piety to parents, and prayer, and the eight beatitudes, "have promises of this life, and of that which is to come[u]," respectively: and yet nothing will obtain these promises, but the harmony and uniting of these graces, in a holy and habitual confederation. And when we consider the promise, as singularly relating to that one grace, it is to be understood comparatively; that is, such persons are happy, if compared with those who have contrary dispositions. For such a capacity does its portion of the work, towards complete felicity, from which the contrary quality does estrange and

[p] Τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀφαιμένους καὶ ἀντιλέγοντας μᾶλλον κολάζομεν· πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ὁμολογοῦντας δικαίως κολάζεσθαι θυμούμενοι.—*Arist. Rhet.* 2.

[q] Jam. v. 20. [r] Tob. iv. 10. [s] 1 John, iii. 3.
[t] Rom. v. 5. [u] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

disentitle us. 2. The special and minute actions, and instances, of these three preparatives of repentance, are not under any command in the particulars, but are to be disposed of by Christian prudence, in order to those ends to which they are most aptly instrumental and designed: such as are fasting, and corporal severities in satisfaction, or the punitive parts of repentance; they are either vindictive of what is past, and so are proper acts or effects of contrition and godly sorrow; or else they relate to the present and future estate, and are intended for correction or emendation, and so are of good use as they are medicinal, and in that proportion not to be omitted. And so is confession to a spiritual person, an excellent instrument of discipline, a bridle of intemperate passions, an opportunity of restitution: "Ye which are spiritual, restore such a person overtaken in a fault[x]," saith the apostle; it is the application of a remedy, the consulting with a guide, and the best security to a weak, or lapsed, or an ignorant person, in all which cases he is unfit to judge his own questions, and in these he is also committed to the care and conduct of another. But these special instances of repentance are capable of suppletories, and are, like the corporal works of mercy, necessary only in time and place, and in accidental obligations. He that relieves the poor, or visits the sick, choosing it for the instance of his charity, though he do not redeem captives, is charitable, and hath done his alms. And he that cures his sin by any instruments, by external, or interior and spiritual remedies, is penitent, though his diet be not ascetic and afflictive, or his lodging hard, or his sorrow bursting out into tears, or his expressions passionate and dolorous[y]. I only add this, that acts of public repentance must be by using the instruments of the church, such as she hath appointed; of private, such as, by experience, or by reason, or by the counsel we can get, we shall learn to be most effective of our penitential purposes. And yet it is a great argument that the exterior expressions of corporal severities are of good benefit, because, in all ages, wise men and severe penitents have chosen them for their instruments.

[x] Gal. vi. 1.

[y] Vide Disc. of Mortification, Part i. and Disc. of Fasting, Part. ii.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who wert pleased in mercy to look upon us when we were in our blood, to reconcile us when we were enemies, to forgive us in the midst of our provocations of thy infinite and eternal majesty, finding out a remedy for us which mankind could never ask, even making an atonement for us by the death of thy Son, sanctifying us by the blood of the everlasting covenant and thy all-hallowing and divinest Spirit; let thy graces so perpetually assist and encourage my endeavours, conduct my will, and fortify my intentions, that I may persevere in that holy condition which thou hast put me in by the grace of the covenant, and the mercies of the holy Jesus. O let me never fall into those sins, and retire to that vain conversation, from which the eternal and merciful Saviour of the world hath redeemed me; but let me grow in grace, adding virtue to virtue, reducing my purposes to act, and increasing my acts till they grow into habits, and my habits till they be confirmed, and still confirming them till they be consummate in a blessed and holy perseverance. Let thy preventing grace dash all temptations in their approach; let thy concomitant grace enable me to resist them in the assault, and overcome them in the fight: that my hopes be never discomposed, nor my faith weakened, nor my confidence made remiss, nor my title and portion in the covenant be lessened. Or if thou permittest me at any time to fall, (which, holy Jesu, avert, for thy mercy and compassion's sake,) yet let me not sleep in sin, but recall me instantly by the clamours of a nice and tender conscience, and the quickening sermons of the Spirit, that I may never pass from sin to sin, from one degree to another; lest sin should get the dominion over me, lest thou be angry with me, and reject me from the covenant, and I perish. Purify me from all uncleanness, sanctify my spirit, that I may be holy as thou art, and let me never provoke thy jealousy, nor presume upon thy goodness, nor distrust thy mercies, nor defer my repentance, nor rely upon vain confidences; but that I may, by a constant, sedulous, and timely endeavour, make my calling and election sure, living

to thee and dying to thee; that, having sowed to the Spirit, I may from thy mercies reap in the Spirit bliss, and eternal sanctity, and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our hope, and our mighty and ever-glorious Redeemer. Amen.

Upon Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and of the Eight Beatitudes.

1. THE holy Jesus, being entered upon his prophetical office, in the first solemn sermon gave testimony that he was not only an interpreter of laws then in being, but also a Lawgiver, and an Angel of the new and everlasting covenant; which because God meant to establish with mankind by the mediation of his Son, by his Son also he now began to publish the conditions of it: and that the publication of the Christian law might retain some proportion at least, and analogy of circumstance, with the promulgation of the law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. And here he taught all the disciples; for what he was now to speak was to become a law, a part of the condition on which he established the covenant, and founded our hopes of heaven. Our excellent and gracious Lawgiver, knowing that the great argument in all practical disciplines is the proposal of the end, which is their crown and their reward, begins his sermon, as David began his most divine collection of hymns, with "blessedness." And having enumerated eight duties, which are the rule of the spirits of Christians, he begins every duty with a beatitude, and concludes it with a reward; to manifest the reasonableness, and to invite and determine our choice to such graces which are circumscribed with felicities, which have blessedness in present possession, and glory in the consequence, which, in the midst of the most passive and afflictive of them, tells us that we are blessed, which is indeed a felicity, as a hope is good, or as a rich heir is rich, who, in the midst of his discipline, and the severity of tutors and governors, knows he is designed to, and certain of, a great inheritance.

2. The eight beatitudes, which are the duty of a Christian, and the rule of our spirit, and the special discipline of Christ, seem like so many paradoxes and impossibilities reduced to reason; and are indeed virtues made excellent by rewards, by the sublimity of grace, and the mercies of God, hallowing and crowning those habits which are despised by the world, and are esteemed the conditions of lower and less considerable people. But God "sees not as man sees," and his rules of estimate and judgment are not borrowed from the exterior splendour, which is apt to seduce children, and cozen fools, and please the appetites of sense and abused fancy; but they are such as he makes himself, excellencies which, by abstractions and separations from things below, land us upon celestial appetites. And they are states of suffering rather than states of life: for the great employment of a Christian being to bear the cross, Christ laid the pedestal so low, that the rewards were like rich mines interred in the deeps and inaccessible retirements, and did choose to build our felicities upon the torrents and violences of affliction and sorrow. Without these graces we cannot get heaven; and without sorrow and sad accidents, we cannot exercise these graces. Such are,

3. First: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Poverty of spirit is in respect of secular affluence and abundance, or in respect of great opinion and high thoughts[a]; either of which have divers acts and offices. That the first is one of the meanings of this text is certain, because St. Luke, repeating this beatitude, delivers it plainly, "Blessed are the poor[b];" and to it he opposes riches. And our blessed Saviour[c] speaks so suspiciously of riches and rich men, that he represents the condition to be full of danger and temptation: and St. James[d] calls it full of sin; describing rich men to be oppressors, litigious, proud, spiteful, and contentious; which sayings, like all others of that nature, are to be understood in common and most frequent accidents, not regularly, but very improbable to be otherwise. For if we consider our vocation, St. Paul informs us, that "not many mighty, not many noble, are called;" but "God

[a] Πτωχοὶ ψυχῇ. πτωχοὶ ταπεινόφρονες.
[b] Luke, vi. 20.
[c] Ver. 24.
[d] James, ii. 6, &c. v. 1, &c.

hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith:" And how "hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven," our great Master hath taught us, by saying, "It is more easy for a camel to pass through a needle's eye." And the reason is, because of the infinite temptation which riches minister to our spirits; it being such an opportunity of vices, that nothing remains to countermand the act, but a strong, resolute, unaltered, and habitual purpose, and pure love of virtue; riches, in the mean time, offering to us occasions of lust, fuel for revenge, instruments of pride, entertainment of our desires, engaging them in low, worldly, and sottish appetites, inviting us to show our power in oppression, our greatness in vanities, our wealth in prodigal expenses, and to answer the importunity of our lusts, not by a denial, but by a correspondence and satisfaction, till they become our mistresses, imperious, arrogant, tyrannical, and vain[e]. But poverty is the sister of a good mind; it ministers aid to wisdom, industry to our spirit, severity to our thoughts, soberness to counsels, modesty to our desires; it restrains extravagancy and dissolution of appetites; the next thing above our present condition, which is commonly the object of our wishes, being temperate and little, proportionable enough to nature, not wandering beyond the limits of necessity or a moderate conveniency, or, at farthest, but to a free refreshment and recreation. And the cares of poverty are single and mean, rather a fit employment to correct our levities, than a business to impede our better thoughts; since a little thing supplies the needs of

[e] Nulli fortunæ minùs bene quàm optimæ creditur. Aliâ felicitate ad tuendam felicitatem est opus. — *Senec.*

Ὤφελες, ὦ τυφλὲ πλοῦτε, μήτ' ἐν γῇ, μήτ' ἐν θαλάττῃ, μήτ' ἐν ἠπείρῳ φανῆναι, ἀλλὰ τάρταρόν τε νάειν καὶ ἀχέροντα· διὰ σὲ γὰρ πάντα ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακά. — *Timocr. Lyr.*

Vel nos in mare proximum
Gemmas et lapides, aurum et inutile,
Summi materiam mali,
Mittamus. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 24.

Ὁ δὲ πλοῦτος ἡμᾶς, καθάπερ ἰατρὸς κακὸς, τυφλοῦς (βλέποντας παραλαβὼν) πάντας ποιεῖ. — *Antiphanes.*

Δοῦλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμην, καὶ σώματι πηρὸς,
Καὶ πενίην Ἶρος, καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτοις.
Γλακτοφάγων, ἀβίων τε, δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων,

dixit Homerus de Mysis et Hippomolgis, lib. xiii. Il. Justissimos et longævos dixit qui vescebantur lacte et cibo modesto.

nature, and the earth and the fountain[f] with little trouble minister food to us, and God's common providence and daily dispensation eases the cares, and makes them portable. But the cares and businesses of rich men are violences to our whole man; they are loads of memory, business for the understanding, work for two or three arts and sciences, employment for many servants to assist in, increase the appetite, and heighten the thirst; and, by making their dropsy bigger, and their capacities large, they destroy all those opportunities and possibilities of charity, in which only riches can be useful.

4. But it is not a mere poverty of possession which entitles us to the blessing, but a poverty of spirit; that is, a contentedness in every state, an aptness to renounce all when we are obliged in duty, a refusing to continue a possession, when we for it must quit a virtue or a noble action, a divorce of our affections from those gilded vanities, a generous contempt of the world; and at no hand heaping riches, either with injustice or with avarice, either with wrong or impotency, of action or affection. Not like Laberius, described by the poet[g], who thought nothing so criminal as poverty, and every spending of a sesterce was the loss of a moral virtue, and every gaining of a talent was an action glorious and heroical. But poverty of spirit accounts riches to be the servants of God first, and then of ourselves, being sent by God, and to return when he pleases, and all the while they are with us to do his business. It is a looking upon riches and things of the earth, as they do who look upon it from heaven, to whom it appears little and unprofitable. And because the residence of this blessed poverty is in the mind, it follows that it be here understood, that all that exinanition and renunciation, abjection and humility of mind, which depauperates the spirit, making it less worldly and more spiritual, is the duty here enjoined. For if a man

[f] —— Satis est fluviusque Cereaque. — *Lucan.*
Ἐπεὶ τί δεῖ βροτοῖσι πλὴν δυοῖν μόνοι,
Δημητρὸς ἀκτῆς, πώματος θ' ὑδρηχόου,
Ἄπεστι, καὶ πίφυχ' ἡμᾶς τρέφειν. — *Eurip.*

[g] —— Quoad vixit, credidit ingens
Pauperiem vitium, et cavit nil acrius, ut si
Fortè minùs locuples uno quadrante periret,
Ipse videretur nequior sibi —————— *Horat.*

throws away his gold, as did Crates the Theban, or the proud philosopher Diogenes, and yet leaves a spirit high, airy, fantastical, and vain, pleasing himself, and with complacency reflecting upon his own act, his poverty is but a circumstance of pride, and the opportunity of an imaginary and a secular greatness. Ananias and Sapphira renounced the world by selling their possessions; but because they were not "poor in spirit," but still retained the affections to the world, therefore they "kept back part of the price," and lost their hopes. The church of Laodicea[h] was possessed with a spirit of pride, and flattered themselves in imaginary riches; they were not poor in spirit, but they were poor in possession and condition. These wanted humility, the other wanted a generous contempt of worldly things; and both were destitute of this grace.

5. The acts of this grace are: 1. To cast off all inordinate affection to riches[i]. 2. In heart and spirit, that is, preparation of mind, to quit the possession of all riches, and actually so to do when God requires it, that is, when the retaining riches loses a virtue. 3. To be well pleased with the whole economy of God, his providence and dispensation of all things, being contented in all estates. 4. To employ that wealth God hath given us[k], in actions of justice and religion. 5. To be thankful to God in all temporal losses. 6. Not to distrust God, or to be solicitous and fearful of want in the future. 7. To put off the spirit of vanity, pride, and fantastic complacency in ourselves, thinking lowly or meanly of whatsoever we are or do. 8. To prefer others before ourselves, doing honour and prelation to them, and either contentedly receiving affronts done to us, or modestly undervaluing ourselves. 9. Not to praise ourselves, but when God's glory and the edification of our neighbour is concerned in it, nor willingly to hear others praise us. 10. To despoil ourselves

[h] Apocal. iii. 17.

[i] Ἐγὼ οὔτ' Ἀμαλθείης βουλόμην κέρας, οὔτ' ἔτεα πεντήκοντα ἑκατὸν Ταρτήσου βασιλεῦσαι. — *Anacreon.*

[k] Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Rectè beatum: rectiùs occupat
Nomen beati, qui deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti,
Duramque callet pauperiem pati,
Pejusque letho flagitium timet, &c. — *Hor.* lib. iv. *Od.* 9.

of all interior propriety, denying our own will in all instances of subordination to our superiors, and our own judgment in matters of difficulty and question, permitting ourselves and our affairs to the advice of wiser men, and the decision of those who are trusted with the cure of our souls. 11. Emptying ourselves of ourselves, and throwing ourselves wholly upon God, relying upon his providence, trusting his promises, craving his grace, and depending upon his strength for all our actions, and deliverances, and duties.

6. The reward promised is "the kingdom of heaven. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom[l]." To be little in our own eyes is to be great in God's; the poverty of the spirit shall be rewarded with the riches of the kingdoms, of both kingdoms[m]: that of heaven is expressed. Poverty is the highway of eternity. But, therefore, the kingdom of grace is taken in the way, the way to our country; and it, being the forerunner of glory, and nothing else but an antedated eternity, is part of the reward as well as of our duty. And, therefore, whatsoever is signified by kingdom, in the appropriate evangelical sense, is there intended as a recompense. For the kingdom of the Gospel is a congregation and society of Christ's poor, of his "little ones:" they are the communion of saints, and their present entertainment is knowledge of the truth, remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and what else in Scripture is signified to be a part, or grace, or condition of the kingdom. For "to the poor the Gospel is preached[n];" that is, to the poor the kingdom is promised and ministered.

7. Secondly: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." This duty of Christian mourning is commanded not for itself, but in order to many good ends. It is in order to patience: "Tribulation worketh patience;" and therefore "we glory in them[o]," saith St. Paul; and St. James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith (viz.

[l] Latiùs regnes avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Libyam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni. — *Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 2.
Serviet æternùm, qui parvo nesciet uti. — *Hor.*

[m] Matt. xi. 11. and xviii. 4. [n] Matt. xi. 5.

[o] Rom. v. 3. Gaudet patientia duris.

by afflictions) worketh patience [p]." 2. It is in order to repentance: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance [q]." By consequence it is in order to pardon; for "a contrite heart God will not reject." And after all this it leads to joy; and therefore St. James preached a homily of sorrow: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep," that is, in penitential mourning; for he adds, "humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up [r]." The acts of this duty are: 1. To bewail our own sins. 2. To lament our infirmities, as they are principles of sin, and recessions from our first state. 3. To weep for our own evils and sad accidents, as they are issues of the Divine anger. 4. To be sad for the miseries and calamities of the church, or of any member of it; and, indeed, to "weep with every one that weeps;" that is, not to rejoice in his evil, but to be compassionate, and pitiful, and apt to bear another's burden. 5. To avoid all loose and immoderate laughter, all dissolution of spirit and manners, uncomely jestings, free revellings, carnivals, and balls, which are the perdition of precious hours, (allowed us for repentance and possibilities of heaven,) which are the instruments of infinite vanity, idle talking, impertinency, and lust, and very much below the severity and retiredness of a Christian spirit. Of this Christ became to us the great example; for St. Basil reports a tradition of him, that he never laughed, but wept often. And if we mourn with him, we also shall rejoice in the joys of eternity.

8. Thirdly: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the earth:" that is, the gentle and softer spirits, persons not turbulent or unquiet, not clamorous or impatient, not over-bold or impudent, not querulous or discontented, not brawlers or contentious, not nice or curious, but men who submit to God, and know no choice of fortune, or employment, or success, but what God chooses for them, having peace at home, because nothing from without does discompose their spirit. In some, meekness is an indifference to

[p] James, i. 2, 3.
[q] 2 Cor. vii. 10.
[r] James, iv. 9, 10.

Sic enim per oculos cùm notas turpes trahat,
Rursus per ipsos lacrymas fundit pias,
Egressione ut eluat quæ ingressa sunt.

Dum dolemus admissa, admittenda excludimus; et fit quædam de condemnatione culpæ disciplina innocentiæ. — *S. Ambros.*

any exterior accident, a being reconciled to all conditions and instances of Providence, a reducing ourselves to such an evenness and interior satisfaction, that there is the same conformity of spirit and fortune by complying with my fortune, as if my fortune did comply with my spirit[s]. And, therefore, in the order of beatitudes, meekness is set between mourning and desire, that it might balance and attemper those actions by indifference, which, by reason of their abode, are apt to the transportation of passion[t]. The reward expressed is "a possession of the earth," that is, a possession of all which is excellent here below, to consign him to a future glory, as Canaan was a type of heaven. For meekness is the best cement and combining of friendships, it is a great endearment of us to our company. It is an ornament to have "a meek and quiet spirit[u]," a prevention of quarrels, and pacifier of wrath[x]; it purchaseth peace, and is itself a quietness of spirit: it is the greatest affront to all injuries in the world; for it returns them upon the injurious, and makes them useless, ineffective, and innocent; and is an antidote against all the evil consequents of anger and adversity, and tramples upon the usurping passions of the irascible faculty.

9. But the greatest part of this paysage and landscape is sky: and as a man, in all countries, can see more of heaven than of the earth he dwells on; so also he may in this promise. For although the Christian hears the promise of "the inheritance of the earth," yet he must place his eye, and fix his heart, upon heaven, which, by looking downward also upon this promise, as in a vessel of limpid water, he may

[s] Πρᾳεῖς εἰσιν οἱ κατεσταλμένοι τὰ ἤθη, καὶ πάντος πάθους ἀπηλλαγμένοι, ὡς μηδεμίαν ἴσχειν ταραχὴν ἐνοικοῦσαν αὐτῶν ταῖς ψυχαῖς. — *S. Basil. in Psal.* 33.

[t] Mansuetus et æquus secundùm Arist. est εὐτυχῶν μέτριος, et ἀτυχῶν μεγαλόψυχος.

Ὅσσα τε δαιμονίοισι τύχαις θεοτὸν ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πρᾴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει. — *Pythag. Carm. Aur.*

Æquam memento rebus in arduis
Servare mentem; non secùs in bonis
Ab insolenti temperatam
Lætitia, moriture Deli. — *Horat. Carm.* lib. ii. *Od.* 3.

Quem res plùs nimio delectavere secundæ,
Mutatæ quatient. ———————— *Ad Fusc.*

[u] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

[x] Ὁ θυμὸς φύσει αἴτιον, συμφορᾶς σύμμαχον, βλάβης σύνεργον καὶ ἀτιμίας, χρημάτων ἀπώλεια, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φθορᾶς ἀρχηγόν. — *Aristot.*

see by reflection, without looking upwards by a direct intuition. It is heaven that is designed by this promise, as well as by any of the rest; though this grace takes in also the refreshments of the earth by equivalence, and a suppletory design. But "here we have no abiding city," and, therefore, no inheritance; this is not our country, and therefore here cannot be our portion; unless we choose, as did the prodigal, to go into a strange country, and spend our portion with riotous and beastly living, and forfeit our Father's blessing. The devil, carrying our blessed Saviour to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world; but, besides that they were offered upon ill conditions, they were not eligible by him upon any. And neither are they to be chosen by us for our inheritance and portion evangelical: for the Gospel is founded upon "better promises," and therefore, the hopes of a Christian ought not to determine upon any thing less than heaven. Indeed our blessed Saviour chose to describe this beatitude in the words of the Psalmist, so inviting his disciples to an excellent precept, by the insinuation of those Scriptures which themselves admitted. But as the earth, which was promised to the meek man in David's psalm, was no other earth but the *terra promissionis*, the land of Canaan; if we shall remember that this land of promise was but a transition and an allegory to a greater and more noble, that it was but a type of heaven, we shall not see cause to wonder why the holy Jesus, intending heaven for the reward of this grace also, together with the rest, did call it "the inheritance of the earth." For now is revealed to us "a new heaven and a new earth, an habitation made without hands, eternal in the heavens." And he understands nothing of the excellence of Christian religion, whose affections dwell below, and are satisfied with a portion of dirt and corruption. "If we be risen with Christ, let us seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." But if a Christian desires to take possession of this earth in his way, as his inheritance or portion, he hath reason to fear it will be his all. We have but one inheritance, one country; and here we are "strangers and pilgrims." Abraham told Dives that he had "enjoyed his good things here;" he had "the inheritance of the earth," in the crass material sense; and, therefore, he had no other portion but what the devils have.

And when we remember that persecution is the lot of the church, and that poverty is her portion, and her quantum is but "food and raiment" at the best, and that patience is her support, and hope her refreshment, and self-denial her security, and meekness is all her possession and title to a subsistence; it will appear certain, that as Christ's "kingdom was not of this world," so neither shall his saints have their portion in that which is not his kingdom. They are miserable if they do not reign with him, and he never reigned here; but "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him" hereafter. True it is, Christ promised to him that should lose any interest for his sake, the restitution of "a hundred fold in this world." But as the sense of that cannot be literal, for he cannot receive a hundred mothers or a hundred wives; so whatsoever that be, it is to be enjoyed "with persecution." And then such a portion of the earth as Christ hath expressed in figure, and shall, by way of recompense, restore us, and such a recompense as we can enjoy with persecution, and such an enjoyment as is consistent with our having lost all our temporals, and such an acquist and purchase of it as is not destructive of the grace of meekness; all that we may enter into our accounts as part of our lot, and the emanation from the holy promise. But in the foot of this account we shall not find any great affluence of temporal accruements. However it be, although when a meek man hath earthly possessions, by this grace he is taught how to use them, and how to part with them; yet if he hath them not, by the virtue here commanded, he is not suffered to use any thing violent towards the acquiring them, not so much as a violent passion, or a stormy imagination; for then he loses his meekness, and whatever he gets can be none of the reward of this grace. He that fights for temporals (unless by some other appendant duty he be obliged,) loses his title, by striving incompetently for the reward; he cuts off that hand by which alone he can receive it. For unless he be indeed meek, he hath no right to what he calls "the inheritance of the earth;" and he that is not content to want the inheritance of the earth when God requires him, is not meek. So that if this beatitude be understood in a temporal sense, it is an offer of a reward upon a condition we shall be without it, and be content too: for,

in every sense of the word, meekness implies a just satisfaction of the spirit, and acquiescence in every estate or contingency whatsoever, though we have no possessions but of a good conscience, no bread but that of carefulness, no support but from the Holy Spirit, and a providence ministering to our natural necessities, by an extemporary provision. And certain it is, the meekest of Christ's servants, the apostles and the primitive Christians, had no other verification of this promise but this, that "rejoicing in tribulation, and knowing how to want, as well as how to abound, through many tribulations they entered into the kingdom of heaven:" for that is the country in which they are co-heirs with Jesus. But if we will certainly understand what this reward is, we may best know it by understanding the duty; and this we may best learn from him that gave it in commandment. "Learn of me, for I am meek," said the holy Jesus: and to him was promised, that "the uttermost ends of the earth should be his inheritance;" and yet he died first, and went to heaven, before it was verified to him in any sense, but only of content, and desire, and joy in suffering, and in all variety of accident. And thus also, if we be meek, we may receive the inheritance of the earth.

10. The acts of this grace are: 1. To submit to all the instances of Divine providence[y], not repining at any accident which God hath chosen for us, and given us as part of our lot, or a punishment of our deserving, or an instrument of virtue; not envying the gifts, graces, or prosperities of our neighbours. 2. To pursue the interest and employment of our calling in which we are placed, not despising the meanness of any work, though never so disproportionable to our abilities. 3. To correct all malice, wrath, evil-speaking, and inordinations of anger, whether in respect of the object or the degree. 4. At no hand to entertain any thoughts of revenge or retaliation of evil. 5. To be affable and courteous in our deportment towards all persons of our society and

[y] Non si malè nunc, et olim
Sic erit ——:——
Rebus angustis animosus atque
Fortis appare: sapienter idem
Contrahes vento nimiùm secundo
Turgida vela. — *Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 10.

intercourse. 6. Not to censure or reproach the weakness of our neighbour, but support his burden, cover and cure his infirmities. 7. To excuse what may be excused, lessening severity, and being gentle in reprehension. 8. To be patient in afflictions, and thankful under the cross. 9. To endure reproof, with shame at ourselves for deserving it, and thankfulness to the charitable physician that offers the remedy[z]. 10. To be modest and fairly mannered toward our superiors, obeying, reverencing, speaking honourably of, and doing honour to, aged persons, and all whom God hath set over us, according to their several capacities. 11. To be ashamed and very apprehensive of the unworthiness of a crime; at no hand losing our fear of the invisible God, and our reverence to visible societies, or single persons[a]. 12. To be humble in our exterior addresses, and behaviour in churches and all holy places. 13. To be temperate in government, not imperious, unreasonable, insolent, or oppressive, lest we provoke to wrath those, whose interest of person and of religion we are to defend or promote. 14. To do our endeavour to expiate any injury we did, by confessing the fact, and offering satisfaction, and asking forgiveness.

11. Fourthly: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." This grace is the greatest indication of spiritual health, when our appetite is right, strong, and regular; when we are desirous of spiritual nourishment, when we long for manna, and "follow Christ for loaves," not of a low and terrestrial gust, but of that "bread which came down from heaven." Now there are two sorts of holy repast which are the proper objects of our desires. The bread of heaven, which is proportioned to our hunger; that is, all those immediate emanations from Christ's pardon of our sins, and redemption from our former conversation, holy laws, and commandments. To this food there is also a spiritual beverage to quench our thirst: and

[z] Πρῶτον ἀγαθῶν, τὸ ἀναμάρτητον· δεύτερον δὲ, αἰσχύναι. — *Melis. Disc.* 19.

Neque ulli patientius reprehenduntur quàm qui maximè laudari merentur. — *Plin.* lib. vii. c. 10.

Θρασυστομεῖν γὰρ οὐ πρέπει τοὺς ἥσσονας. *Æsch.* Ἱκέτιδες.

[a] Salva res est, propter spem salutis quam promittit indoles erubescentis. — *Comæd.*

Γηράσκων δ' ἀστοῖσι μεταπρέπει, οὐδέ τις αὐτὸν
Βλάπτειν οὐδ' αἰδοῦς οὐδὲ δίκης ἐθέλει. — *Theog.*

this is the effects of the Holy Spirit, who first "moved upon the waters" of baptism, and afterwards became to us "the breath of life," giving us holy inspirations and assistances, refreshing our wearinesses, cooling our fevers, and allaying all our intemperate passions, making us holy, humble, resigned, and pure, "according to the pattern in the mount," even "as our Father is pure." So that the first redemption and pardon of us by Christ's merits is the bread of life, for which we must hunger; and the refreshments and daily emanations of the Spirit, who is the spring of comforts and purity, is that drink which we must thirst after: a being first reconciled to God by Jesus, and a being sanctified and preserved in purity by the Holy Spirit, is the adequate object of our desires. Some, to hunger and thirst best, fancy the analogy and proportion of the two sacraments, the waters of baptism, and the food of the eucharist; some, the bread of the patin, and the wine of the chalice. But it is certain they signify one desire, expressed by the most impatient and necessary of our appetites, hungering and thirsting. And the object is whatsoever is the principle or the effect, the beginning, or the way, or the end of righteousness; that is, the mercies of God, the pardon of Jesus, the graces of the Spirit, a holy life, and a holy death, and a blessed eternity.

12. The blessing and reward of this grace is fulness or satisfaction: which relates immediately to heaven, because nothing here below can satisfy us. The grace of God is our viaticum, and entertains us by the way; its nature is to increase, not to satisfy the appetites: not because the grace is empty and unprofitable, as are the things of the world; but because it is excellent, but yet in order to a greater perfection; it invites the appetite by its present goodness, but it leaves it unsatisfied, because it is not yet arrived at glory: and yet the present imperfection, in respect of all the good of this world's possession, is rest and satisfaction, and is imperfect only in respect of its own future complement and perfection; and our hunger continues, and our needs return, because all we have is but an antepast. But the glories of eternity are also the proper object of our desires; that is the reward of God's grace, this is "the crown of righteousness." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy likeness, I

shall be satisfied with it[b]." The acts of this virtue are multiplied according to its object; for they are only, 1. to desire, and 2. pray for, and 3. labour, for all that which is righteousness in any sense: 1. for the pardon of our sins; 2. for the graces and sanctification of the Spirit; 3. for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; 4. for the reception of the holy sacrament, and all the instruments, ordinances, and ministries of grace; 5. for the grace of perseverance; 6. and finally, for the crown of righteousness.

13. Fifthly: "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Mercy is the greatest mark and token of the holy, elect, and predestinate persons in the world. "Put ye on, my beloved, as the elect of God, the bowels of mercy, holy and precious[c]." For mercy is an attribute, in the manifestation of which as all our happiness consists[d], so God takes greatest complacency and delights in it above all his other works. "He punishes to the third and fourth generation, but shows mercy unto thousands." Therefore the Jews say, that Michael flies with one wing, and Gabriel with two; meaning, that the pacifying angel, the minister of mercy, flies swift, but the exterminating angel, the messenger of wrath, is slow. And we are called to our approximation to God by the practice of this grace: we are made "partakers of the Divine nature" by being "merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful." This mercy consists in the affections, and in the effects and actions. In both which the excellence of this Christian precept is eminent above the goodness of the moral precept of the old philosophers, and the piety and charity of the Jews by virtue of the Mosaic law. The Stoic philosophers affirm it to be the duty of a wise man, to succour and help the necessities of indigent and miserable persons; but at no hand to pity them, or suffer any trouble or compassion in our affections: for they intended that a wise person should be dispassionate, unmoved, and without disturbance in every accident, and object, and concernment. But the blessed Jesus, who came to

[b] Psal. xvii. 15. [c] Col. iii. 12.

[d] Neque enim sunt isti audiendi qui virtutem duram et quasi ferream esse volunt; quæ quidem est cùm in multis rebus, tum in amicitia, tenera atque tractabilis, ut et bonis amici quasi diffundantur, et incommodis contrahantur. — *Lælius apud M. T. Cic.*

reconcile us to his Father, and purchase us an entire possession, did intend to redeem us from sin, and make our passions obedient and apt to be commanded, even and moderate in temporal affairs, but high and active in some instances of spiritual concernment; and in all instances, that the affection go along with the grace; that we must be as merciful in our compassion, as compassionate in our exterior expressions and actions. The Jews, by the prescript of their law, were to be merciful to all their nation and confederates in religion; and this their mercy was called justice: "He hath dispersed abroad and given to the poor, his righteousness (or justice) remaineth for ever." But the mercies of a Christian are to extend to all: "Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith[e]." And this diffusion of a mercy, not only to brethren, but to aliens and enemies, is that which St. Paul calls "goodness[f]," still retaining the old appellative for Judaical mercy, "righteousness:" "For scarcely for a righteous[g] man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some will even dare to die." So that the Christian mercy must be a mercy of the whole man, the heart must be merciful, and the hand operating in "the labour of love;" and it must be extended to all persons of all capacities, according as their necessity requires, and our ability permits, and our endearments and other obligations dispose of and determine the order.

14. The acts of this grace are: 1. To pity the miseries of all persons, and all calamities, spiritual or temporal, having a fellow-feeling in their afflictions. 2. To be afflicted and sad in the public judgments imminent or incumbent upon a church, or state, or family. 3. To pray to God for remedy for all afflicted persons. 4. To do all acts of bodily assistance to all miserable and distressed people, to relieve the poor, to redeem captives, to forgive debts to disabled persons, to pay debts for them, to lend them money, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, to rescue persons from dangers, to defend and relieve the oppressed, to comfort widows and fatherless children, to help them to right that suffer wrong; and, in brief, to do any thing of relief, support, succour, and

[e] Gal. vi. 10. [f] Rom. v. 7.

[g] Syrus interpres non legit ὑπὲρ δικαίου, sed ἀδίκου, injusti.

comfort. 5. To do all acts of spiritual mercy, to counsel the doubtful, to admonish the erring, to strengthen the weak, to resolve the scrupulous, to teach the ignorant, and any thing else which may be instrumental to his conversion, perseverance, restitution, and salvation, or may rescue him from spiritual dangers, or supply him in any ghostly necessity. The reward of this virtue is symbolical to the virtue itself, the grace and glory differing in nothing but degrees, and every virtue being a reward to itself. "The merciful shall receive mercy;" mercy "to help them in time of need;" mercy from God, who will not only give them the great mercies of pardon and eternity, but also dispose the hearts of others to pity and supply their needs, as they have done to others. For the present, there is nothing more noble than to be beneficial to others, and to "lift up the poor out of the mire," and rescue them from misery; it is to do the work of God[h]: and for the future, nothing is a greater title to a mercy, at the day of judgment, than to have shown mercy to our necessitous brother; it being expressed to be the only rule and instance in which Christ means to judge the world, in their mercy and charity, or their unmercifulness, respectively; "I was hungry, and ye fed me," or ye fed me not: and so we stand or fall in the great and eternal scrutiny. And it was the prayer of St. Paul, (Onesiphorus showed kindness to the great apostle,) "The Lord show him a mercy in that day." For a cup of charity, though but full "of cold water, shall not lose its reward."

15. Sixthly: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." This purity of heart includes purity of hands. "Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? even he that is of clean hands and a pure heart;" that is, "he that hath not given his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour[i]." It signifies justice of action and candour of spirit, innocence of manners and sincerity of purpose; it is one of those great circumstances that consummate charity: "for the end of the commandment is charity, out of a

[h] Bona comparat præsidia misericordia; et habet in adversis auxilia qui in secundis commodat. — *Publius.*

Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via. — *Sen.*

[i] Psal. xxiv. 3, 4.

pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned[k];" that is, a heart free from all carnal affections, not only in the matter of natural impurity, but also spiritual and immaterial; such as are heresies, (which are therefore impurities, because they mingle secular interest or prejudice with persuasions in religion,) seditions, hurtful and impious stratagems, and all those which St. Paul enumerates to be "works" or "fruits of the flesh." "A good conscience;" that is a conscience either innocent or penitent, a state of grace, either a not having prevaricated, or a being restored to our baptismal purity. "Faith unfeigned;" that also is the purity of sincerity, and excludes hypocrisy, timorous and half persuasions, neutrality and indifferency in matters of salvation. And all these do integrate the whole duty of charity. But purity, as it is a special grace, signifies only honesty and uprightness of soul, without hypocrisy to God and dissimulation towards men; and then a freedom from all carnal desires, so as not to be governed or led by them. Chastity is the purity of the body, simplicity is the purity of the spirit: both are the sanctification of the whole man, for the entertainment of the spirit of purity and the spirit of truth.

16. The acts of this virtue are: 1. To quit all lustful thoughts, not to take delight in them, not to retain them or invite them, but, as objects of displeasure, to avert them from us. 2. To resist all lustful desires, and extinguish them by their proper correctories and remedies. 3. To refuse all occasions, opportunities, and temptations to impurity; denying to please a wanton eye, or to use a lascivious gesture, or to go into a danger, or to converse with an improper, unsafe object; "hating the garment spotted with the flesh," so St. Jude calls it; and "not to look upon a maid," so Job; "not to sit with a woman that is a singer," so the son of Sirach. 4. To be of a liberal soul, not mingling with affections of money and inclinations of covetousness, not doing any act of violence, rapine, or injustice. 5. To be ingenuous in our thoughts, purposes, and professions, speaking nothing contrary to our intentions, but being really what we seem. 6. To give all our faculties and affections to God, without dividing interests between God and his enemies, without

[k] 1 Tim. i. 5.

entertaining of any one crime in society with our pretences for God. 7. Not to lie in sin, but instantly to repent of it[l] and return, "purifying our conscience from dead works." 8. Not to dissemble our faith or belief when we are required to its confession, pretending a persuasion complying with those from whom secretly we differ. Lust, covetousness, and hypocrisy, are the three great enemies of this grace; they are the motes of our eyes, and the spots of our souls. The reward of purity is the vision beatifical. If we are "pure as God is pure, we shall" also "see him as he is: when we awake up after his likeness, we shall behold his presence." To which in this world we are consigned by freedom from the cares of covetousness, the shame of lust, the fear of discovery, and the stings of an evil conscience, which are the portion of the several impurities here forbidden.

17. Seventhly: "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. The wisdom of God is first pure, and then peaceable[m];" that is the order of the beatitudes. As soon as Jesus was born, the angels sang a hymn, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men;" signifying the two great errands upon which Christ was despatched in his legation from heaven to earth. He is "the Prince of Peace." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man ever shall see God." The acts of this grace are: 1. To mortify our anger, peevishness, and fiery dispositions, apt to enkindle upon every slight accident, inadvertency, or misfortune of a friend or servant. 2. Not to be hasty, rash, provocative, or upbraiding in our language. 3. To live quietly and serenely in our families and neighbourhoods. 4. Not to backbite, slander, misreport, or undervalue any man, carrying tales, or sowing dissension between brethren. 5. Not to interest ourselves in the quarrels of others, by abetting either part, except where charity calls us to rescue the oppressed; and then also to do a work of charity without mixtures of uncharitableness. 6. To avoid all suits of law, as much as is possible, without intrenching upon any other collateral obligation towards a third interest, or a necessary support for

[l] Plato vocat puritatem ἀνώκρισιν χειρόνων ἀπὸ βελτιόνων.
[m] James, iii. 17.

ourselves, or great conveniency for our families; or, if we be engaged in law, to pursue our just interests with just means and charitable maintenance. 7. To endeavour by all means to reconcile disagreeing persons. 8. To endeavour, by affability and fair deportment, to win the love of our neighbours. 9. To offer satisfaction to all whom we have wronged or slandered, and to remit the offences of others, and, in trials of right, to find out the most charitable expedient to determine it, as by indifferent arbitration, or something like it. 10. To be open, free, and ingenuous, in reprehensions and fair expostulations with persons whom we conceive to have wronged us, that no seed of malice or rancour may be latent in us, and, upon the breath of a new displeasure, break out into a flame. 11. To be modest in our arguings, disputings, and demands, not laying great interest upon trifles. 12. To moderate, balance, and temper our zeal, by the rules of prudence and the allay of charity, that we quarrel not for opinions, nor entitle God in our impotent and mistaken fancies, nor lose charity for a pretence of an article of faith. 13. To pray heartily for our enemies, real or imaginary, always loving and being apt to benefit their persons, and to cure their faults by charitable remedies. 14. To abstain from doing all affronts, disgraces, slightings, and uncomely jeerings and mockings of our neighbour, not giving him appellatives of scorn or irrision. 15. To submit to all our superiors in all things, either doing what they command, or suffering what they impose; at no hand lifting our heel against those upon whom the characters of God, and the marks of Jesus, are imprinted in signal and eminent authority; such as are principally the king, and then the bishops, whom God hath set to "watch over our souls." 16. Not to invade the possessions of our neighbours, or commence war, but when we are bound by justice and legal trust to defend the rights of others, or our own, in order to our duty. 17. Not to "speak evil of dignities," or undervalue their persons, or publish their faults, or upbraid the levities of our governors; knowing that they also are designed by God, to be converted to us for castigation and amendment of us. 18. Not to be busy in other men's affairs. And then "the peace of God will rest upon us[a]."

[a] Phil. iv. 9. 1 Thess. v. 2, 3. 2 Thess. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20.

The reward is no less than the adoption and inheritance of sons; for "he hath given unto us power to be called the sons of God;" for he is the Father of peace, and the sons of peace are the sons of God, and therefore have a title to the inheritance of sons, to be heirs with God, and co-heirs with Christ, in the kingdom of peace, and essential and never-failing charity[o].

18. Eighthly: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This being the hardest command in the whole discipline of Jesus, is fortified with a double blessedness; for it follows immediately, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you;" meaning, that all persecution for a cause of righteousness, though the affliction be instanced only in reproachful language, shall be a title to the blessedness. Any suffering, for any good or harmless action, is a degree of martyrdom. It being the greatest testimony in the world of the greatest love, to quit[p] that for God which hath possessed our most natural, regular, and orderly affections. It is a preferring God's cause before our own interest; it is a loving of virtue without secular ends; it is the noblest, the most resigned, ingenuous, valiant act in the world, to die for God, whom we never have seen; it is the crown of faith, the confidence of hope, and our greatest charity. The primitive churches living under persecution commenced many pretty opinions concerning the state and special dignity of martyrs, apportioning to them one of the three coronets which themselves did knit, and supposed as pendants to the great "crown of righteousness." They made it suppletory of baptism, expiatory of sin, satisfactory of public penances; they placed them in bliss[q] immediately, declared them to need no after-prayer, such as the devotion of those times used to pour upon the graves of the faithful: with great prudence they did endeavour to alleviate this burden, and sweeten the bitter chalice; and they did it by such doctrines,

[o] Rom. viii. 17.

[p] ——Dulce periculum est,
O Lenæe, sequi deum
Cingentem viridi tempora pampino.
Hor. lib. iii. *Od.* 25.

[q] Animas prælio aut suppliciis peremptorum æternas putant. Hinc moriendi contemptus. — *C. Tacitus de Judæis.*

which did only remonstrate this great truth, That since "no love was greater than to lay down our lives," nothing could be so great but God would indulge to them. And indeed, whatsoever they said in this had no inconvenience, nor would it now, unless men should think mere suffering to be sufficient to excuse a wicked life, or that they be invited to dishonour an excellent patience with the mixture of an impure action. There are many who would die for Christ if they were put to it, and yet will not quit a lust[r] for him: those are hardly to be esteemed Christ's martyrs: unless they be "dead unto sin," their dying for an article, or a good action, will not pass the great scrutiny. And it may be boldness of spirit, or sullenness, or an honourable gallantry of mind, or something that is excellent in civil and political estimate, moves the person, and endears the suffering; but that love only "which keeps the commandments" will teach us to die for love, and from love to pass to blessedness through the red sea of blood. And, indeed, it is more easy to die for chastity, than to live with it[s]: and many women have been found, who suffered death under the violence of tyrants for defence of their holy vows and purity, who, had they long continued amongst pleasures, courtships, curiosities, and importunities of men, might perchance have yielded that to a lover, which they denied to an executioner. St. Cyprian observes, that our blessed Lord, in admitting the innocent babes of Bethlehem first to die for him, did, to all generations of Christendom, consign this lesson, That only persons holy and innocent were fit to be Christ's martyrs. And I remember, that the prince of the Latin poets[t], over against the region and seats of infants, places in the shades below persons that suffered death wrongfully; but adds, that this their death was not enough to place them in such blessed mansions, but the Judge first made inquiry into their lives, and accordingly designed their station. It is certain, that such dyings, or

[r] Non est autem consentaneum, qui metu non frangatur, eum frangi cupiditate; nec qui invictum se à labore præstiterit, vinci à voluptate.—*Cic. de Offic.* lib. i.

Tertul. de Castit.

[t] Hos juxta falso damnati crimine mortis.
Nec verò hæ sine sorte datæ, sine judice, sedes;
Quæsitor Minos urnam movet; ille silentûm
Conciliumque vocat, vitasque et crimina discit.—*Virg. Æneid.* 6.

great sufferings, are heroical actions, and of power to make great compensations, and redemptions of time, and of omissions and imperfections; but if the man be unholy, so also are his sufferings[u]: for heretics have died, and vicious persons have suffered in a good cause, and a dog's neck may be cut off in sacrifice, and swine's blood may fill the trench about the altar: but God only accepts the sacrifice which is pure and spotless, first seasoned with salt, then seasoned with fire. The true martyr must have all the preceding graces, and then he shall receive all the beatitudes.

19. The acts of this duty are: 1. Boldly to confess the faith, nobly to exercise public virtues, not to be ashamed of any thing that is honest, and rather to quit our goods, our liberty, our health, and life itself, than to deny what we are bound to affirm, or to omit what we are bound to do, or to pretend contrary to our present persuasion. 2. To rejoice in afflictions; counting it honourable to be conformable to Christ, and to wear the cognizance of Christianity, whose certain lot it is to suffer the hostility and violence of enemies, visible and invisible. 3. Not to revile our persecutors, but to bear the cross with evenness, tranquillity, patience, and charity. 4. To offer our sufferings to the glory of God, and to join them with the passions of Christ, by doing it in love to God, and obedience to his sanctions, and testimony of some part of his religion, and designing it as a part of duty. The reward is "the kingdom of heaven;" which can be no other but eternal salvation, in case the martyrdom be consummate: and "they also shall be made perfect[x];" so the words of the reward were read in Clement's time. If it be less, it keeps its proportion: all suffering persons are the combination of saints; they make the church, they are the people of the kingdom, and heirs of the covenant. For if they be but confessors, and confess Christ in prison, though they never preach upon the rack or under the axe, yet "Christ will confess them before his heavenly Father;" and "they shall have a portion where they shall never be persecuted any more[y]."

[u] Athleta non vincit statim quia eruitur, nec ideo transnatant quia se spoliant. — *Sever. Ep.* 2.

[x] Ὅτι ἀυτοὶ ἔσονται τέλειοι.

[y] Sic etiam olim legebatur haec periodus; ὅτι ἕξουσι τόπον ἵνα οὐ διωχθήσονται.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed Jesus, who art become to us the fountain of peace and sanctity, of righteousness and charity, of life and perpetual benediction, imprint in our spirits these glorious characterisms of Christianity, that we by such excellent dispositions may be consigned to the infinity of blessedness, which thou camest to reveal, and minister, and exhibit to mankind. Give us great humility of spirit; and deny us not, when we beg sorrow of thee, the mourning and sadness of true penitents, that we may imitate thy excellences, and conform to thy sufferings. Make us meek, patient, indifferent, and resigned in all accidents, changes, and issues of Divine providence. Mortify all inordinate anger in us, all wrath, strife, contention, murmurings, malice, and envy; and interrupt, and then blot out, all peevish dispositions and morosities, all disturbances and unevenness of spirit or of habit, that may hinder us in our duty. Oh teach me so to "hunger and thirst after" the ways of "righteousness," that it may be "meat and drink" to me "to do thy Father's will." Raise my affections to heaven and heavenly things, fix my heart there, and prepare a treasure for me, which I may receive in the great diffusions and communications of thy glory. And, in this sad interval of infirmity and temptations, strengthen my hopes, and fortify my faith, by such emissions of light and grace from thy Spirit, that I may relish those blessings which thou preparest for thy saints with so great appetite, that I may despise the world and all its gilded vanities, and may desire nothing but the crown of righteousness, and the paths that lead thither, the graces of thy kingdom and the glories of it; that when I have served thee in holiness and strict obedience, I may reign with thee in the glories of eternity: for thou, O holy Jesus, art our hope, and our life, and glory, our exceeding great reward. Amen.

II.

Merciful Jesu, who art infinitely pleased in demonstrations of thy mercy, and didst descend into a state of misery,

suffering persecution and affronts, that thou mightest give us thy mercy, and reconcile us to thy Father, and make us partakers of thy purities; give unto us tender bowels, that we may suffer together with our calamitous and necessitous brethren, that we, having a fellow-feeling of their miseries, may use all our powers to help them, and ease ourselves of our common sufferings. But do thou, O holy Jesus, take from us also all our great calamities, the carnality of our affections, our sensualities and impurities, that we may first be pure, then peaceable, living in peace with all men, and preserving the peace which thou hast made for us with our God, that we may never commit a sin which may interrupt so blessed an atonement. Let neither hope nor fear, tribulation nor anguish, pleasure nor pain, make us to relinquish our interest in thee, and our portion of the everlasting covenant. But give us hearts constant, bold, and valiant, to confess thee before all the world, in the midst of all disadvantages and contradictory circumstances, choosing rather to beg, or to be disgraced, or afflicted, or to die, than quit a holy conscience, or renounce an article of Christianity: that we, either in acts, when thou shalt call us, or always in preparation of mind, suffering with thee, may also reign with thee in the church triumphant, O holy and most merciful Saviour Jesu. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST,
AND THE SECOND OF THE WORKS.

J. MOYES, GREVILLE STREET, LONDON.

3 2044 054 762 414
NOT TO BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

3 2044 054 762 414
NOT TO BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

3 2044 054 762 414
NOT TO BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY